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Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-94-249
Wednesday
28 December 1994

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Near East & South Asia

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Inter-Arab Affairs

League Chief Declines Comment on Rabin's Oman Visit

NC2712151594 Cairo MENA in English 1326 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 27 (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid said that the seminar currently in session under the title of "What Comes After the Casablanca Summit," is a nonofficial meeting aiming at drawing up a future vision of the League's role.

In statements he gave here today, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid pointed out that an economic conference is to be held next year in Oman, modeled on the Casablanca summit. This is a natural process in order to upgrade the League, he said.

On the possibility of holding an Arab summit now that the Casablanca economic summit has been held, the League's chief said that this is for the Arab leaders to decide.

He declined to comment on a question about a recent meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Sultan Qabus Bin Sa'id of Oman.

Islamic Affairs

ICO's Algabid Condemns Israeli Jerusalem Decision

LD2712192194 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1750 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 27 Dec—Dr. Hamid Algabid, secretary general of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO], denounced the Israeli Knesset's adoption yesterday of a decision forbidding the PLO from having any representation, or carrying out any activity, in holy Jerusalem without prior permission.

In a statement published today by the organization, he said that this decision impeded progress of the peace process, and contradicted the agreement on the implementation of the Declaration of Principles on the transitional self-rule in the Palestinian occupied territories with the aim of establishing a new de facto situation when neither side, according to the agreement, was entitled to take steps which would affect the result of the talks intended to be held on Jerusalem.

Dr. Algabid noted that this decision and Israel's continuous attempts to build more settlements and expand other settlements shows Israel's non-commitment to the bases of the peace process and implies Israel's continuation to implement its plan aimed at judaising the holy city of Jerusalem and wiping out its Arab and Islamic landmarks. It also contradicts the status of the holy city Jerusalem which was upheld by international legitimacy, particularly in the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly resolutions which consider the Israeli law annexing the city null and void.

The ICO secretary general called on the international community and especially the cochairmen of the peace process to point out the danger inherent in this decision. He stressed the need to push the peace process forward and impel Israel not to embark on any measure that makes any changes to the Holy City of Jerusalem during the transitional period.

The ICO secretary general affirmed that the stand of the Islamic nation on the city of Jerusalem as an integral part of Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 is applicable to it as it is applicable to the rest of the occupied areas in accordance with the resolutions of the international legitimacy and that any just and comprehensive solution to the conflict in the region must include its return to Palestinian sovereignty as a capital of the state of Palestine.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat on Future Jordan Visit, Jerusalem Talks

JN2612072294 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] In an interview with AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH today, his Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat said he will visit Jordan soon. His excellency said that Jerusalem is our soul and our most sacred place, and we have serious ideas on how to protect our shrines and institutions there. He added: However, I expect negotiations on it to be arduous and complicated.

His excellency called on all to come to the homeland to share in the challenge. He said that the past introduces the present, the march continues, the challenges increase, and the need for work doubles.

President 'Arafat added: We have established our National Authority [NA] and we now stand where we should to pursue the tasks with which we are entrusted. Citizens have a right to make remarks and to criticize. He called on all NA officials to listen to the citizens remarks. His excellency said priority should now be given to the elections and added that the readiness to hold a dialogue with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and any other opposition faction still exists. His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat said he hopes that God will give him a child that will be either the brother or sister of his 29 children, and a brother or sister of all the heroes of Palestine.

'Arafat Receives Phone Call From King Husayn

JN2612072594 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat has received a phone call from his brother His

Majesty King Husayn of Jordan concerning the visit his excellency will soon make to Jordan.

Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, President Yasir 'Arafat's press adviser, described the phone conversation as cordial and fraternal.

'Arafat Views Israeli Procrastination on DOP

JN2712165594 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat at noon today received a Palestinian Popular Struggle Front [PPSF] delegation under PPSF Political Bureau Member Fadl Tahbub.

His excellency spoke about Israel's procrastination in implementing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles on the Israeli army's redeployment and the elections. His excellency stressed the importance of national unity and participation in establishing democratic institutions, and the need to maintain continuity between those in the homeland and those outside it to achieve our people's objectives of repatriation and the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as capital.

'Arafat Comments on al-Khidr Events

JN2712200794 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman and head of the Palestinian National Authority, this evening received the Russian charge d'affaires, and the consuls of Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Norway. President 'Arafat gave them letters to their countries' leaders on the Israeli practices against the Palestinian people and land, particularly what took place in al- Khidr today.

President 'Arafat said that these practices conflict with the peace agreement signed between the PLO and Israel, and even undermine the entire peace process, not to mention that they violate human rights and international law.

Ahmad Quray', minister of economy, trade, and industry; Al-tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the presidency; and Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, President 'Arafat's adviser, attended the meeting.

'Arafat Calls For Steadiness of People of al-Khidr

JN2812091394 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat has addressed a letter to the people of al-Khidr village in which he called on them to remain steadfast in their land and not to submit to the provocations of settlers and those who support the Israelis. His excellency said that the dawn will inevitably break, victory will be achieved shortly, and the Palestinian flag will flutter over all the blessed Palestinian land.

'Arafat Aide Calls For Return of al-Khidr Lands

JN2712165394 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, has held the Israeli government fully responsible for this morning's clashes between Palestinian citizens and the Israeli occupation forces in al-Khidr village. Many Palestinian land owners were either arrested or wounded.

Abu-Rudaynah called on the Israeli government to end the Israeli settlers expansionist practices and return the confiscated lands to their legal owners. He said that the Israeli government's policy and the army's collusion with the settlers confirm that the Israeli side continues to place obstacles on the road to peace, and this widens the gap between the Palestinian and Israeli people.

PLO Seeks UN Debate on Settlement Expansion

TA2412164494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The PLO is demanding an urgent session of the UN Security Council to debate the expansion of Jewish settlements in Judaea and Samaria. The PLO claims the actions violate the agreement it signed with Israel.

Marwan Kanafani, Yasir 'Arafat's media adviser, said after the Palestinian Authority's weekly meeting that if the settlement expansion does not stop, the peace process will lose its significance and the PLO will hold Israel responsible.

'Arafat Appoints Busaysu Monetary Authority Governor

JN2812093894 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Dec 94 p 14

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Yasir 'Arafat, head of the Palestinian National Authority, has decided to appoint Dr. Fu'ad Hamdi Busaysu as governor of the Palestinian Monetary Authority.

This monetary authority, which functions as a Palestinian central bank, will be in charge of Palestinian banks in the self-rule region. It will also be responsible for issuing Palestinian currency in the future, once an agreement is reached in this respect with other competent quarters. [passage omitted]

FIDA Official Criticizes Authority's Performance

MM2312115294 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Dec 94 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Zuhayrah Kamal, member of the Executive

Bureau of the Palestinian Democratic Union "FIDA," has criticized the Palestinian National Authority's performance in the negotiations with Israel and in running self-rule affairs in Gaza and Jericho. Kamal, whose party is in charge of two portfolios in the authority, namely the youth ministry and the culture and information ministry, pointed out that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has become the only authority—which has given the masses the impression that autocracy is in charge of all issues. Kamal, who is participating in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations in Cairo, stressed the need for the negotiations to have an authority, for some changes to be made regarding the negotiators in line with the nature of the issues being negotiated, and for experienced negotiators to be used in this connection to ensure a better performance and better results.

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Zuhayrah Kamal said that the Palestinian Authority should have taken qualitative measures when it arrived in Gaza, such as putting the right person in the right place and not burdening its organs with large numbers of employees, taking account of the financial resources. Kamal urged the authority to work to reinforce the people's organizations' participation in areas like health, education, employment, and studies. She pointed out that that would spare the authority a lot of efforts as regards implementation and the provision of services.

Kamal stressed that Israel is seeking to obstruct the negotiations with a view to gaining time to improve its negotiating position and secure further concessions from the Palestinians. She said that the Israelis are "exploiting a number of issues relating to the Palestinian negotiating performance." She expressed her belief that the issue of the Israeli Army's redeployment is settled and was agreed in the declaration of principles, which stipulates the rescheduling of Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank once a date for the elections is announced—which means that it is not necessary to discuss the redeployment. Kamal added, "we have now entered negotiations over minor issues that do not need to be discussed."

On what is reported from time to time about the possibility of FIDA's pullout from the Palestinian Authority, Zuhayrah Kamal said that "so far the factors that prompted our participation in this Authority are still there. We joined the Authority to participate in building a Palestinian society of a new kind."

'Urayqat on 'Arafat-Peres Meeting, Elections

JN2312211994 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1803 GMT 23 Dec 94

[Interview with Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government of the Palestinian Authority, and chairman of the Palestinian Elections Committee, by Salim Badawi; place and date not given; from "The Event" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Badawi] We asked Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat about the outcome of the Gaza meeting [between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in Gaza on 21 December] and if the two sides drew up any new bases for future negotiations with Israeli?

['Urayqat] The meeting of His Excellency President 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Peres discussed two issues. The first issue was that his excellency the president wanted the Israeli Govenrment to confirm its commitment to the Declaration of Principles [DOP] signed in Washington. The second issue was that 'Arafat also wanted them to declare they were not seeking any changes in the DOP, particularly in provisions pertaining to the redeployment of the Israeli forces in the rest of the West Bank. This was announced by Peres very clearly before us and before the press later on. However, the level of negotiations was raised regarding sensitive issues like the redeployment, authority transfer, and security issues. These will be discussed by His Excellency President 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin. At the same time, negotiations on elections will go on in Cairo. As you know, We are trying to implement the second transitional phase, known as the phased agreement, which consists of four elements; namely, the redeployment of the Israeli forces outside the populated areas in the West Bank and replacing them by Palestinian forces, reviewing military laws and orders, transferring the rest of the authorities, and holding general political elections to elect a Palestinian legislative council.

[Badawi] Following the Gaza meeting, some reports said you were planning to enter into secret negotiations, if we can put is that way, as it happened before the Oslo negotiations. Is this true?

['Urayqat] In fact, Israel agreed to raise the level of the negotiations, which, they said, will be held at direct meetings, including phone contacts and the exchange of information. They also said that mass media organs should be engaged in these negotiations.

[Badawi] Is there any Israeli intention to amend the DOP accord regarding the redeployment of the Israeli forces?

['Urayqat] In fact, such an intention was obvious in Rabin's statements on his way to Tokyo and in Japan, as well as in Israeli officials' statements carried by the Israeli press. They revolved around a temporary redeployment, a decorative redeployment, and a gradual redeployment. To us, these matters were a source of great concern. We asked for this meeting before holding any negotiations so that we can explore the true Israeli position, since the DOP stipulates the redeployment in two stages. The first stage of redeployment will take place before the elections and outside populated areas of the rest of the West Bank, that is, outside cities, villages, camps, and any other Palestinian populated areas. Following the elections, the second stage of redeployment will be carried out in specified security places. During the Gaza meeting, they did not propose any change or amendment, decorative or gradual redeployment. They said they would literally comply with the contents of the DOP. [passage omitted]

[Badawi] What is your response to the Israeli charges that the Palestinian National Authority has failed to spread security and to control the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad groups?

['Urayqat] Naturally, to begin with, what was signed between Israel and Palestinians is neither a peace agreement nor a peace treaty. It is a declaration of principles. To be engaged in the peace process with Israel does not mean that we must start war among ourselves. We are a society based on political pluralism and on the complete freedom of expression by every Palestinian individual, faction, or group. We distinguish between political pluralism, which is a right, and the plurality of authorities. We did not go into to the peace process with Israel to wage a war among ourselves. Therefore, dialogue among our entire people is our only option to attain our objective of establishing our independent state based on democracy, control. and scrutiny.

[Badawi] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, you chair the election committee which will supervise and organize the election process. The elections have been delayed six months from the date set at the DOP. In light of the results of the Gaza meeting, how do you describe the fate of these elections?

['Urayqat] In fact, if we view the DOP signed in Washington and the Oslo agreement, we will find that the nucleus of the transitional period is based on the elections. Everything else is also linked to the elections. Truly, in accordance with the agreement, the elections were supposed to be held on 13 July. As you know, in April we signed a partnership agreement with the European Union. We did not only ask for $4.5 million from Europe to cover the expenses of the election process, but we also set up bilateral joint committees concerning administrative, training, technical, and legal issues. I can say now that we have completed the Palestinian election law and the training of over 4,500 people to run 1,500 ballot boxes. We also conducted a complete survey process and specified the electoral constituencies. We opened regional election offices. I can say that we are almost 95 percent ready. But I would like to note that the committee I am chairing is not the committee which will organize the elections. We are a preparatory committee. When we complete the tasks assigned to us—most of which have been completed, except for some minor matters—this committee will be dissolved. Another central election committee comprised of three judges and two university presidents from the West Bank will be set up. They will supervise the election process.

[Badawi] So, cannot we now predict any date for those elections?

['Urayqat] Regrettably, I cannot say that there is a date or a possible date. This depends on the redeployment of Israeli troops. In other words, the elections cannot be held without the completion of the first stage of Israeli troop redeployment; that is, the departure and withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the Palestinian cities, villages, and camps. In this context, withdrawal and redeployment will be one-way; irreversible departure. It is unreasonable that the general elections be held or considered unless this condition is met. The objective of the entire peace process is to gradually end the occupation. If the elections are held under the occupation, this will be a true catastrophe. We do not want just a change in the name of the occupation. We seek a gradual termination of the occupation rather than a reorganization of the occupation. The Israeli side made unofficial proposals through news media and its leaders' statements about holding the elections without redeployment. However, such proposals are not in line with the DOP and are unacceptable. The objective is gradual termination of the occupation.

[Badawi] There remains one issue within the question of elections, which is the participation of the factions and organizations opposed to the Oslo agreement and the DOP. Are you planning to hold a dialogue and negotiations with those groups to convince them of the need to take part in the forthcoming elections?

['Urayqat] In fact, the Palestinian election law stipulates that every Palestinian who becomes 18 years old or more on the morning of the elections is entitled to take part in the elections, regardless of sex, religion, political and intellectual affiliation, or financial, economic, and political status. Since the establishment of the committee, we went to our brothers from all Palestinian factions and told them that the job of this committee is to prepare for elections and not to organize them. We asked them to join us officially or through observers. We told them that we will review documents with them and that their political position will not be affected. However, in the final analysis, the decision on whether or not to take part in the elections is up to those factions. We call, and I personally call, on every Palestinian to take part in the elections. This is because the elected council will hold negotiations on basic and crucial issues, including [Resolution] 242, settlement activity, refugees, border, and Jerusalem. Therefore, there must be full Palestinian participation. However, in the final analysis, it is up to every Palestinian person, faction, and movement to participate or not. I hope that everyone without exception will take part.

Sha'th Urges Reconsideration of Settlement Expansion

TA2812121594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PLO negotiator Nabil Sha'th has called on the government to reconsider expanding the Efrat settlement. He was speaking to reporters before visiting Palestinians being held in the Sharon prison near Tel Aviv. Alan Ben-'Ami reports:

[Begin recording] [Ben-'Ami] This is the first time that any member of the Palestinian Authority [PA] has visited Palestinian security prisoners in Israeli jails. But perhaps almost inevitably, it was the ongoing dispute over land beside the Jewish settlement of Efrat near Bethlehem that Nabil Sha'th addressed when he talked to reporters as he arrived at the Sharon prison this morning:

[Sha'th] I think the Efrat case is a major setback, and I hope—I am sure—the Israeli Government will reconsider that.

[Ben-'Ami] Dr. Sha'th's prison call was arranged during a meeting with Police Minister Moshe Shahal last week. He will be meeting with the 32 women prisoners—18 of them Fatah members—from Israel and the territories, who are serving prison terms for various security offenses. Another 52 male security prisoners are in jail, but they are not on Dr. Sha'th's visiting list today.

The PA is continually pressing for release of Palestinian prisoners as an essential part of the peace process, and Nabil Sha'th says that he will be raising the issue once again after his visit today. [end recording]

After he ends his visit, Nabil Sha'th will travel to Nabulus jail to meet there with Palestinian inmates.

Suspension of Talks Urged To Protest Activity

TA2712173894 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Dec 94 p 4

[Report by Zaynab 'Awdah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza—Shaykh Ahmad Bahr, a leader of the Islamic Movement in the Gaza Strip, has called for halting the talks with the Israeli side as a practical protest against the construction of thousands of settlement housing units in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Shaykh Bahr said that Israel is violating what was agreed on with the Palestinian side in the Oslo agreement in terms of freezing settlement activity. He added that this violation is considered a grave encroachment on Jerusalem within the framework of an Israeli plan to Judaize the city.

Shaykh Bahr appealed to all Arab and Islamic countries to intervene and adopt a unified stance vis-a-vis the Israeli challenge in order to save Jerusalem and deny Israel the opportunity to Judaize the city.

Shaykh Bahr regretted that the Islamic summit in Morocco did not focus its attention on Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's remarks that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and that it has political sovereignty over Jerusalem. The summit only deliberated on whether to give religious jurisdiction over the holy shrines to the Jordanian or Palestinian side.

Shaykh Bahr called on the United Nations to implement its resolutions, which has stipulated that Jerusalem is occupied territory since 1967.

Shaykh Bahr called on the Palestinian Authority to raise the issue of Israeli violations in Jerusalem on the Arab and international levels. He also demanded the convocation of a popular national and Islamic conference to discuss the Israeli campaign in Jerusalem.

Abu-Zayyad Reacts to Law on PA Activity in Jerusalem

TA2712073694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Palestinian senior negotiator Ziyad Abu-Zayyad has reacted sharply to the new law [restricting Palestinian activity in Jerusalem]. In this interview with reporter Mark Weiss, he denies that the Palestinian Authority [PA] has conducted any activities in East Jerusalem which it has not carried out in the past and he warns that to ignore Palestinian interests in East Jerusalem is to create a time bomb.

[Begin recording] [Abu-Zayyad] Well, nothing unusual and nothing new is done in Jerusalem. We have been conducting our daily life and our activity all the time in Jerusalem. There is nothing new in the matter. But, I believe that the Israeli Government by enhancing its settling policy and building settlements around Jerusalem and trying to change the physical image of the city side by side with legislating this law, is trying to decide the outcome of the negotiations on Jerusalem even before the negotiations start and this by itself represents a violation of the peace process and a violation of the whole good intentions of making peace in this part of the world.

[Weiss] Now, from the Palestinian perspective, is there any way we can make progress in the peace talks without East Jerusalem becoming the center of the Palestinian entity that will be established?

[Abu-Zayyad] I do not see any chance or any possibility for a durable peace and a just peace in the region without observing and guaranteeing the rights of the Arabs and the Muslims and the Christians in the city of Jerusalem. [end recording]

Orient House: Political Activities Will Continue

JN2712171194 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] In the first official comment on the law banning official Palestinian activities in Jerusalem, a statement issued by the Orient House press office says this law is a flagrant violation of the Palestinian agreement and of international resolutions, specifically resolution 242 issued on 21 May 1969 which viewed Jerusalem as part of occupied Palestinian territory.

The statement adds that the continuation of these Israeli measures poses a genuine threat to the entire peace process and reconfirms that the Israeli government endangers the peace process and disavows the agreements it signed with the PLO, agreements that stipulate that the discussion of the question of Jerusalem will be deferred to the final stage of the negotiations and that no unilateral arrangements should be made that will affect the status of the city or of its Palestinian institutions as mentioned in the secret letters the Israeli government sent to the PLO.

The statement says Orient House will pursue its political activities as usual, within the framework of the bases that were agreed upon when it was opened in 1992. The new Israeli law cannot prevent these activities, which were instrumental in launching the peace process and in allowing it to get as far as it has. This law cannot conceal the Arab character of Jerusalem and its institutions, or the fact that it is the capital of the Palestinian state.

Consultations Said Underway To Form Political Bloc

TA2812133694 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 26 Dec 94 p 4

[Report by 'Imad al-Ifranji]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Gaza—Palestinian political and popular circles are holding intensive and continuous consultations aimed at establishing a new bloc in the Palestinian arena called the National Democratic Forum.

Many Palestinian national and democratic forces and organizations that support the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, as well as independent figures, have called for the establishment of this forum to defend the Palestinian people's rights to self-determination, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital, and adherence to the right of the refugees and displaced to repatriation in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy.

The provisional preparatory committee in defense of the PLO Charter and the Palestinian people's national rights recently held a meeting in Amman with the participation of Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, former head of the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid and Washington talks, and a number of Palestinian figures, including Shafiq al-Hut, 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, Ibrahim Bakr, and Taysir Khalid to discuss the formation of the National Democratic Forum.

Palestinian sources say that this forum will seek to protect the unity of the Palestinian people in the homeland and the diaspora, affirm the Palestinian people's present and future link with the Arab nation's destiny, and call for free Palestinian elections to choose a Palestinian body that will guide the Authority and the masses and which does not adhere to the conditions or results of the Oslo-Cairo agreements. [passage omitted]

Jailed Hamas Leader on PA, Elections, Attacks

JN2512105294 Paris AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic 26 Dec 94 p 5

["Exclusive" interview with Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, spiritual leader of Hamas, by unidentified correspondent in unidentified Israeli prison; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [AL-MUHARRIR] What, in your view, was the reason behind the bloody events in the Filastin Mosque in Gaza on the bloody Friday, 18 November 1994?

[Yasin] In my view, of course, the Oslo agreement is to blame, for it asks the Palestinian National Authority to maintain Israel's security. In other words, the Palestinian Authority [PA] is required to fight whoever resists the Israelis who occupy our land and holy places.

It is noteworthy that that the Authority is under growing Israeli and international pressure to establish itself by annihilating the Islamic Resistance Movement—Hamas—and the Islamic Jihad movement because they refused to lay down their weapons. Therefore, under those pressures, the PA moved to resist the Islamic awakening and prove its ability on the ground.

[AL-MUHARRIR] Some Hamas officials recently made statements which did not close the door completely before the possibility of Hamas' participation in the PA. How do you view that?

[Yasin] The PA is the outcome of the Oslo and Cairo agreements, which are rejected by Hamas. Hamas will not take part in an authority whose role is to implement those agreements, in which we do not believe and which we have rejected in the first place. When the PA becomes completely free and refrains from protecting Israel's security and implementing its schemes, only then can this stand be reconsidered.

[AL-MUHARRIR] Some claim that it took the PLO over 20 years to become involved in the settlement process, while Hamas is exploiting its military operations to join the settlement process from a strong position. What is your comment?

[Yasin] Hamas proceeds from an ideology, not from vacuum. This Islamic ideology considers Palestine an Islamic trust that is impermissible to be ceded by any leader or generation to others, because they do not own it. Palestine is the property of all Islamic generations.

Hence, Hamas does not view jihad as a means to attain power, but as a means to liberate Palestine, all of Palestine. It is impermissible for Muslims to stop jihad as long as an Islamic territory is occupied, only in cases of a truce with the enemy and until a sufficient force for liberation is gathered.

[AL-MUHARRIR] Can one say that Hamas' refusal to take part in the self-rule elections in accordance with the Oslo formula is final and unequivocal?

[Yasin] We will not participate in any of the self-rule institutions emanating from the Oslo and Cairo agreements, including the elections. Our stand in this regard is final and unequivocal. Those institutions are a tool to implement the agreements that we reject. If we reject them, how can we participate in implementing them? However, I previously said that if an executive authority that is independent from the legislative and judiciary authorities comes into existence, then we can participate in the legislative elections. In that case, the elections will be separated from the executive authority and will represent the people. Then, those elections will reflect the Palestinian people's rejection of the agreements that do not serve their rights or guarantee the Palestinian people's future and right to restore their rights and repatriate refugees and evacuees after the liberation of their homeland.

[AL-MUHARRIR] Some say that there is more than one orientation within Hamas. What do you think?

[Yasin] Hamas is an Islamic movement that resists the Israeli occupation of our Palestinian territory and seeks to restore this territory. It is a healthy phenomenon in the movement to have different views on any Palestinian issue. That does not mean that there are different approaches and trends, for the Islamic faith gathers and unites, whereas repression disperses and fragments. Therefore, there is nothing wrong if some brothers express views that differ from those of others'. However, eventually, everyone is committed to the leadership's decision and is recruited to implement it.

[AL-MUHARRIR] Some Hamas leaders made statements about the possibility of forging a truce with Israel to stop mutual attacks on civilians. What do you think?

[Yasin] In the first place, civilians in Islam are outside the scope of war with the enemies. But the enemy attacks on Palestinian civilians, mass punishment, deportation, and demolishing of houses and sealing others give the Islamic side the right to retaliate against civilians, as the enemy is doing.

Therefore, it is in line with Islamic instructions to remove civilians from the scope of war. But it is essential that the enemy be committed not to violate the rights of Palestinian civilians. If it displays such commitment, then dialogue becomes possible to remove civilians from the scope of war. [passage omitted]

Muslim Leader Rejects Normalization of Israeli Ties

TA2512155294 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Dec 94 p A10

[Report by Ori Nir]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Shaykh Hamid al-Baytawi, who is in charge of the West Bank shari'ah courts on behalf of the Palestinian Authority and who is considered a Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spiritual leader, has rejected the opinion published by 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Baz, general mufti of Saudi Arabia, supporting the normalization of relations between the Arab countries and Israel.

Al-Baytawi, a Nabulus resident who was recently put in charge of the Muslim shari'ah courts in the West Bank, heads the Association of Religious Sages in Palestine [ARSP], a body identified with Hamas. In reaction to last week's opinion by the general mufti of Saudi Arabia, al-Baytawi told journalists in Nabulus the day before yesterday that if reports on the content of Shaykh Bin-Baz' remarks are accurate, then his opinion "is unreasonable" and politically motivated, and it should be rejected outright.

He recalled that the ARSP, which he heads, issued a religious ruling stating that there must be no normalization in relations with Israel. [passage omitted]

Gaza Journalists Protest Treatment by PA, Israel

TA2512193194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Dec 94 p A5

[Report by 'Amira Hess in the Gaza Strip]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The journalists in the Gaza Strip staged a strike yesterday to protest Palestinian Authority's [PA] attitude toward them and the difficulties Israel is putting in the way of their receiving exit permits to the West Bank and Israel.

In a meeting the Gaza journalists held last Thursday, they decided on a series of protest measures, after talks they held with official representatives in an attempt to regulate relations between the PA and the journalists failed to produce results. The main decision was not to cover the weekly PA sessions.

The Gaza journalists have long been complaining about getting poor briefings after the PA meetings, resulting in inferior reporting. They held several talks with PA representatives on the matter, requesting that an accessible spokesman's office be established to provide them with official reactions. They also claim that foreign journalists get preferential treatment from the PA. [passage omitted]

The Gaza journalists sent a letter to Yasir 'Arafat yesterday outlining their complaints and demands. 'Arafat's media adviser, Marwan Kanafani, assured them that 'Arafat is handling the matter of their exit permits.

It was learned from the Liaison and Coordination Directorate (formerly the Israeli Civil Administration) that journalists who possess an Israeli Government Press

Office [GPO] card may be given exit permits, provided that there are no restrictions on their leaving the Strip for security reasons.

In reaction, Gaza journalists say that the number of Israeli card holders is very small, that it is unreasonable for a Palestinian journalist to be recognized as a journalist only if the Israeli GPO recognizes him, and that the restrictions imposed on their movement now are worse than ever before.

[Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew at 1800 GMT on 25 December adds that "the Palestinian journalists in Gaza returned to work today after a 24-hour strike." Among their complaints about the PA's attitude, the journalists mentioned "the treatment they received from 'Arafat's security men, who often resorted to force, but 'Arafat's spokesman insists that Israel is the problem.

["The Gaza journalists are now expecting their Israeli colleagues to come to their aid. If this fails to happen, they say, the next step will be barring the entry of Israeli journalists into Gaza."]

Gaza Factions for Convocation of National Conference

TA2712162294 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 24 Dec 94 pp 1, 7

[Report by Mustafa al-Sawwaf]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, AL-NAHAR Documentation and Media Office—The political factions operating in the Gaza Strip met two days ago for three hours at the World Bank office to discuss the current Palestinian situation and examine the feasibility of convening a comprehensive national conference that would discuss the condition of Palestinian society. This meeting, considered the first of its kind since the bloody events of Friday, 18 November, in which 13 people were martyred, included all Palestinian factions in the Gaza Strip.

The participants stressed that the aim of the meeting was to find a compromise formula regarding daily and political affairs and ways of co-existence that would prevent political differences from leading to Palestinian infighting.

At this meeting, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] was represented by Shaykh 'Imad al-Faluji, Fatah by Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq and 'Abdallah Yaghi, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine by attorney Yunus al-Jaru and Ghazi Abu-Jiyab, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine by Nihad Abu- Ghawsh, and Islamic Jihad by Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Shami and Dr. Muhammad al-Hindi. Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi also participated in the meeting. The factions' representatives presented their views about the issue of dialogue among Palestinian forces and parties for the sake of the supreme national interest and for finding a firm basis for a comprehensive national dialogue.

Shaykh 'Imad al-Faluji said that the meeting was held to reinforce the principle of national dialogue which Hamas has repeatedly underscored. He added that no progress was achieved at the meeting and that several obstacles had to be overcome before the dialogue could succeed.

Shayk 'Abdallah al-Shami said that the meeting sought to discuss the economic and social situation and that the discussion centered on the convocation of a Palestinian national conference that would prevent the eruption of bloody disputes.

Al-Shami added that no agreement was reached at the meeting and that the time slated for the meeting ended with the hope that another meeting would be held next week.

Nihad Abu-Ghawsh said that this meeting was called, especially following Friday's bloody events, in a bid to reach a formula for coexistence and prevent political differences from erupting into internecine killings.

He added that the current dialogue is not between the factions and the Palestinian Authority but between the various factions with the aim of reaching a political agreement. He said that the meeting discussed the convocation of a comprehensive national conference, and noted that Friday's events were not discussed directly but indirectly.

Abu-Ghawsh pointed out that the brothers from Hamas called for the need to clear the climate and remove the obstacles in the Palestinian street that have emanated from the events of sad Friday. He said that it was agreed to hold another meeting soon.

Nazzal on Elections, Relations With PA

JN2312210594 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1816 GMT 23 Dec 94

[Interview with Muhammad Nazzal, representative of Hamas in Jordan, by correspondent Salim Badawi; place and date not given; from "The Event" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Badawi] Mr. Muhammad Nazzal, what is your reply to Israeli statements that the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] has not proved it is capable of checking Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] practices and operations, and that to protect its security and that of its settlers Israel finds itself compelled to review the Declaration of Principles, particularly the clauses related to the redeployment?

[Nazzal] I believe that these are excuses that the Israeli side puts forth. The Israelis, themselves, failed to safeguard Israeli security during the Israeli forces presence in the densely-populated areas in the Gaza Strip. Also, the operations that are taking place in the West Bank and the 1948 areas have nothing to do with the Palestinian Authority's [PA] presence. That's why raising this point is just an excuse the Israeli side puts forth to absolve itself of the need to redeploy its forces in the West Bank.

[Badawi] Does this mean that you reject the accusation that you are responsible, even partially, for obstructing the agreement and delaying the Israeli withdrawal?

[Nazzal] Yes, we are not responsible for this. And the talk by the Israeli side, and even by the Palestinian side that Hamas is responsible is just to justify what is taking place and cannot be substantiated on the ground.

[Badawi] It is known that the delay in the Israeli forces withdrawal from the Palestinian territories will delay the elections on the Palestinian level. Is there any change in your stand on participation in the elections?

[Nazzal] With respect to the elections issue, we believe that announcing a definitive stand on elections requires a clear picture of the details of these elections such as the method, the way they will be held, and whether they are legislative elections or elections to an executive council? The Hamas movement's stand is not to participate in elections to an executive council whose final authority will be the occupation authorities. As for elections to a legislative council, the Hamas movement does not object, in principle, to participate in such elections.

[Badawi] Are there negotiations or talks between you and the Palestinian side, those in the PNA who are directly involved in these elections?

[Nazzal] With respect to elections, there is no dialogue or negotiation on this point. We believe that the Hamas Movement, at this stage, should devote itself to resisting the occupation. In our opinion, the issue of the elections is a secondary issue against the backdrop of the major causes that have to do with the march of the Palestinian cause at this stage.

[Badawi] My last question, how can one evaluate your present relationship with the PNA following the confrontations that took place and the agreements that were concluded to stop the shedding of Palestinian blood?

[Nazzal] The confrontation that took place was between the PA and the Palestinian people from all walks of life. Those who opened fire did so indiscriminately not only on Hamas members but also on members of many other Palestinian sides, and on independents. What I want to say here is that the relationship between the PA and the Hamas movement now is stumbling, and witnesses ups and downs. There is dialogue, but it is foundering. In any case, we have said that intra-Palestinian fighting and clashes with the authority is a red line to us that Hamas seeks not to cross if possible. This is the policy that the Hamas Movement follows.

Preparations for Municipal Elections Detailed

TA2812070294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Within the framework of the preparations for the implementation of autonomy, the Palestinians have drafted a local government law, which includes local council elections. The Palestinians say the municipal elections will be held following the general elections. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports:

[Begin Ben-Menahem recording] Under the new law, municipal elections will be held every four years. The draft law, which took five months to prepare, was handed over to Yasir 'Arafat and members of the Palestinian Authority [PA], as well as representatives of the various Palestinian movements and of the labor and bar associations in the territories, for their comments. The Palestinians say the aim is to achieve uniformity in the running of municipal affairs in the territories and to annul the Jordanian and Egyptian laws which govern municipal affairs in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The draft law divides the territories into regions and municipalities. Each region will be headed by an administrator who will represent the central government and will coordinate between the government and the towns within his jurisdiction. Under the law, each area with over 1,000 people will be considered a municipality. Each municipality will have a council, headed by the mayor. Municipal status will be accorded to 92 West Bank and Gaza Strip villages.

The PA is currently negotiating with opposition organizations in the Gaza Strip to appoint 16 municipal councils which will be temporary, until the elections are held. The Palestinian opposition, headed by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], is not opposed to holding municipal elections and will participate in them. [end recording]

Concern Expressed Over Increase in Police Defections

TA2612122394 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 26 Dec 94 p 5

[Report by Yitzhaq Saban]

[FBIS Translated Text] Senior sources in the Palestinian Police yesterday expressed concern over the increasing number of cases in which Palestinian policemen defect to the rejectionist organizations and even participate in attacks against Israel.

According to the sources, the lives of Palestinian policemen and their families—especially those who are known to be Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] supporters—are being threatened. Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists warn them to join the struggle against the occupation or face death.

Apparently the threats are bearing fruit. According to sources in the Palestinian Police, Palestinian Police and security men who act against the rejectionist organizations have recently started covering their faces for fear that their identities will be discovered and they be subjected to acts of revenge.

Editorial Sees Peace Process on 'Brink of Collapse'

TA2712161694 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM TIMES in English 23 Dec 94 p 4

[Editorial: "Back from the Brink"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The meeting between President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres Dec. 21 in Gaza was disappointing. The two leaders did not agree to take conclusive practical steps to fulfill the second phase of the Oslo Agreement.

According to official sources, 'Arafat and Peres agreed to meet in the future with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

However, the meeting at least reaffirmed a number of important points, particularly that no changes should be made to the Oslo Agreement. The two also agreed that comprehensive, high level negotiations will begin over the implementation of second phase of the agreement.

'Arafat, Rabin and Peres are to discuss the most sensitive issues such as redeployment of the Israeli army, the continuing transfer of authority, and ensuring security for Palestinians and Israelis. Moreover, they agreed to negotiate immediately, through a specialized committee, the issue of the Palestinian prisoners and detainees being held by Israel.

Meanwhile, both sides are determined to convene the Higher Liaison Committee to discuss all the problems related to the Gaza- Jericho Agreement, such as the corridor linking the two cities.

This week a consensus emerged among both Israeli and Palestinian leaders that any unilateral change in the Oslo Agreement would undermine the peace process.

Does this mean the Israelis have realized the inherent danger in their reticence to implement the second phase and have retreated? It is still too early to answer this question, particularly since so many Palestinians are still held in Israeli prisons, directly affecting nearly every Palestinian family in the occupied territories.

In the past few months, the Israeli side has ignored the issue of the Palestinian prisoners while continuing to arrest and detain hundreds of Palestinians.

In spite of all appeals by human rights organizations in the West Bank, Gaza and even in Israel to release the prisoners, Israel has continued to completely disregard the issue.

The resumption of the Cairo talks has revived the issue of the Palestinian prisoners and will certainly rescue the lives of many of those who suffer from critical and serious illnesses without receiving proper treatment.

This stage of the peace process has reached a threshold—it can no longer withstand Israeli political maneuvers. Immediate implementation of the second phase will surely bring the peace process back from the brink of collapse.

Phased Talks Seen To Benefit Israel Only

TA2312172694 Jerusalem AL-TALI'AH in Arabic 22 Dec 94 p 3

[Commentary by Bashir al-Barghuthi: "The Impasse in the Talks Is the Impasse of the Phased Agreements"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The current dispute between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority [PA] about the redeployment of Israeli forces is, in fact, a dispute over the status of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. It is futile to hide this reality under the pretext of "security." The most naive person knows that this pretext is baseless. Anyone who wants security should remove the causes that subject him to danger, which specifically are the presence of the Israeli occupation forces and settlements on the land of others.

The Israeli Government knew of the existence of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and excluded them from the PA's jurisdiction. It expropriated new lands around the settlements under the pretext of providing them with protection. According to the Cairo agreement itself, which guaranteed all this to the Israeli Government, it undertook to redeploy its forces on the basis of withdrawal from Palestinian population centers in preparation for the holding of political elections.

In the wake of that, Rabin stated that he will implement every letter in the agreement. Now, however, the Israeli prime minister has backed down from his previous position, and in his view the criterion is the protection of 120,000 settlers by expanding the area of the settlements in order to safeguard their security. This expansion is expected to include all the West Bank at the expense of the dignity, security, and right of more than two million Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. [passage omitted]

This impasse, which the Cairo agreement is facing, clearly shows that the process of phased talks is to the benefit of the Israeli side. This side has achieved gains by separating the articles of that agreement and renegotiating them.

Hence, it is necessary to emerge from this impasse by changing the Palestinian side's negotiating approach and defining the final goal of the negotiating process. The Palestinian side possesses numerous facts which confirm that the method of separation and phases is tantamount to the countdown for firing the "coup de grace" on Palestinian national rights.

It is the Israeli side itself that has raised the postponed issues and linked them to the interim stage talks. It has done so by linking the redeployment of Israeli forces to the security of settlements, the current settlement activity, and the legislation of new laws to reinforce the annexation of East Jerusalem. The Palestinian side, too, should raise these issues. This will not be merely a reaction but an acknowledgment of the mistake to separate fundamental issues and the need to return to the resolutions of international legitimacy, including Resolution 338. This resolution is one of the two reference points of the negotiating process, which calls for "holding immediate negotiations to implement Security Council Resolution 242 in all its parts and details." That means negotiating once and for all about the final solution on the basis of that resolution.

Algeria

Cherif Denies French Pressure on Hijacking

LD2712212094 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] Interior Minister Meziane Cherif held a news conference in which he answered journalists' questions and gave some clarifications on the hijacking operation, including negotiations with the hijackers. The minister stressed that fear for the safety of the lives of the hostages inside the French airbus made Algerian authorities allow the plane to take off from Houari Boumediene Airport. He denied that the French authorities had put any pressure on the Algerians. To a question on how the hijackers infiltrated the airport and got through blockades, Mr. Meziane Cherif said a committee had been set up to investigate this matter, and the government had taken strict measures and was awaiting the results of the investigation. He added that Prime Minister Mokdad Sifi had given instructions to the minister of transport for special measures to be taken in airports and ports to foil any similar attempts. On the identity of the hijackers, the interior minister said:

[Begin Cherif recording, in French] They were four terrorists known for having committed several attacks. Their area of movements is El Harrach district, approximately. Naturally, they were wanted by the police. Their chief, called 'Abdallah, was known for having committed acts and attacks of rare violence, extreme savagery. [end recording]

[Announcer] According to the interior minister, the demands of the hijackers of the plane remained unclear. Despite the fact that they had raised fifteen issues, Cherif said, they just wanted to create a fait accompli and take Algeria back to the Middle Ages.

French Media Hijacking Coverage Criticized

LD2712215894 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] French media, particularly some television channels, have covered the hijacking that took place in Algeria in a distasteful manner, and their comments made it clear that some antagonistic feelings toward Algeria seem to be present still.

Tact is required when the issue concerns threats to innocent lives. When the issue concerns the plague of terrorism which has hit many societies, and which is threatening many societies across the world, wisdom dictates more caution.

This was the course which was chosen by the Algerian state and Algerian television, faced with this painful issue. [passage omitted]

They tried to spread rumors to the effect that the Algerian authorities were preparing to embark on a suicidal adventure in this case, but they forgot to point out that 64 passengers were released in Algeria. The result could have been better, more precisely complete, if it had not been for external intervention. [passage omitted]

Haddam Faults French Military Presence

LD2712213494 Paris TF-1 Television Network in French 1900 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On Saturday [24 December] night, relations became more tense between the two governments, between the two capitals Algiers and Paris when Edouard Balladour demanded that the plane take off for France. Loick Berrou reports:

[Berrou] [passage omitted] Does the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], which has condemned the hostage-taking, wish to export the Algerian civil war to French territory? The answer is ambiguous:

[Begin Anouar Haddam, president of FIS parliamentary delegation abroad, on the phone from Washington, recording] The issue is a different one. Do the French people wish to exert some pressure on their government so that it ends its military presence in Algeria? [end recording] [passage omitted]

'Terrorist' Group Murders 4 Christian Clerics

Killing Reported

LD2712173994 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] According to the security services, a terrorist group today attacked the resident of Christian clergy in Colonel Arous Street in Tizi Ouzou and killed four of them.

The source added that three of the victims were French, and the fourth was Belgian. The source pointed out that a security cordon has been set up by the civil protection services, and that the security services began the search for the criminals immediately after the incident. [passage omitted]

Interior Minister Comments

LD2712162594 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Abderrahmane Meziane Cherif strongly condemned today the horrible terrorist act which cost the lives of four foreign clerics and which was perpetrated in a house in Tizi Ouzou.

The interior minister expressed his sincere condolences to the families of the victims.

Eyewitness Account

LD2712171794 Paris LCI Television in French 1600 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] It is the first act of reprisals carried out by the Islamists: Four White

Fathers, three French nationals and one Belgian, were killed with automatic weapons this morning in Algeria in Tizi-Ouzou, the capital of the Kabylie region. They are fathers (Jean Chevillard), 69, (Christian Cheysselles), 36, (Alain Dieulongard), 75, and (Charles Deckers), 70, a Belgian.

Listen to the eyewitness account recorded a few minutes ago by Dominique Blanchard. The presbytery cook confirms that, once again, the killers came dressed as policemen:

[Begin unidentified presbytery cook recording] A young man came. He said: You have been summoned to the police station. They left...[pauses] I left with him. He said: [Words indistinct] hear anything in the house? I said: No, there is nothing. So he went up and asked Father Christian Cheysselles to come down from his bedroom. He then asked Father Christian Cheysselles leave. He then said...[pauses] They got the four of them out. Father Jean Chevillard refused to leave, he said [words indistinct] I am working, I cannot leave. He said: I am working. Then the man said: Yes, you have been summoned, you can go to Tizi-Ouzou police station. They fired four bullets into Father Chevillard...[pauses]...three bullets into his back. Then they tried to run away...[pauses] All the others died at the same time. I saw it all happen before my eyes, I cannot...[pauses] Please call me back to talk because of that [as heard]. [end recording]

Forty Killed in Security Operations

LD2412184494 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement issued today says that the Security services have killed 40 terrorists between Tuesday 20 December and Friday 23 December in the provinces of Mostaganem, Oran, Constantine, Tipaza, Tissemsilt, Batna, Chlef, Algiers, Annaba, and Telmcen. The statement adds that the security forces have recovered a significant quantity of weapons, including automatic rifles, shotguns, home-made bombs, and subversive publications.

Agreement Signed With Japan on Rescheduling Debts

LD2612182094 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Central Bank of Algeria announced that a bilateral agreement was signed with Japan today. The agreement fell within the framework of the agreement with the Paris Club on rescheduling Algeria's public debts.

The agreement, which was signed by Central Bank Governor Abdelouahab Keramane for the Algerian side, and by the Japanese ambassador to Algeria for the Japanese side, concerned the rescheduling of about $430 million Algeria owes to Japan. [passage omitted]

Algeria has abandoned the partial solutions which have been in force since the beginning of this decade. It has managed the economy in general, and the indebtedness in particular, pragmatically during the current year, 1994, according to analysts. [passage omitted]

APS Analyzes Economic Situation in Country

LD2612214994 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In an economic analysis supported by data and figures, the Algerian Press Service [APS] revealed a pragmatic approach in economic management in general and in the management of the debts in particular, especially after the signing of the standby agreement. Kerima Abbad provides a look at this issue:

[Begin Kerima recording] A look at the 1994 economic data indicates that the debt services exceeded the exports' revenues, estimated at $8.1 billion, and the import needs, estimated at $9.5 billion, in addition to a heavy food bill, estimated at $3 billion.

After reaching an agreement with the Paris Club, the 1994 debt services amounted to $4.8 billion, in comparison with $8.85 billion expected before rescheduling. According to the Finance Ministry's expectations, these services would not change much in 1995. These services have been reduced by $5 billion over 16 years, together with a four-year grace period. The debtor countries have suggested the principle of a second rescheduling.

The standby agreement was followed by a number of measures, where 90 percent of the prices have been liberalized, in addition to devaluating the national currency, whose administrative value used to be lower than its actual value. [passage omitted]

The budget deficit has also been reduced by 6 percent from the gross national product in 1993 to 0.3 percent in 1994. The 1995 expectations for 1995 are that revenues and expenditures will be balanced. The standby agreement also aimed at reducing the inflation rate. While 50 percent rate of inflation was expected, the average has not exceeded 30 percent this year.

According to APS, the new economic orientation has not excluded the role of the national currency in the economic equilibrium. After its value was devaluated by 40.17 percent, the dinar came closer to its real value and became commercially convertible.

As we near the end of 1994, which achieved a negative rate, economic observers seem to be optimistic for 1995 as they expect the realization of 3 percent growth. [end recording]

Egypt

U.S. Criticized for Vote on Golan Heights

NC2812075594 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 19 Dec 94 p 2

[Comment column by Ahmad Hasan: "A Strange Stand"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Once again, the United States voluntarily offers yet another piece of evidence to destroy the notion of it being an honest and neutral mediator in the peace process in the Middle East: It voted against the UN General Assembly's decision calling on Israel to withdraw completely from the Syrian Golan Heights. Despite the fact that Damascus expressed its shock over the American stand and summoned U.S. Ambassador to Syria Christopher Ross to hand him a memorandum of protest over this issue, Washington's opposition to the decision not only means that it is standing with Israel in one trench, but also that it is voting against the essence of the peace process and is attacking the basis on which the peace process was established. This basis was defined by President al-Asad as full withdrawal in return for full peace.

It seems that this is not an isolated step, but falls within a whole system of disrespectful stands and statements started by Secretary of State Warren Christopher during his recent tour. During this tour, Christopher abandoned his traditional diplomacy and spoke with the voice of the Israeli hawks. He affirmed that Israel must not withdraw from the Golan Heights before getting sufficient security guarantees. After that, there were Yitzhaq Rabin's statements during his tour of South Korea and Japan, in which he made many allegations and leveled many accusations against Syria. He expressed his belief that Syria's purchase of missiles from North Korea threatens peace in the Middle East.

Within this framework, there is also the endless Israeli belligerence represented by its rejection of Egypt's initiative to remove nuclear weapons from the region, which is what David 'Ibri, head of Israel's delegation to the negotiations of the regional armament and security observation committee, recently said. He said that nuclear weapons cannot be removed from the Middle East region before peace is established. How? No one knows, but it is nuclear peace the Israeli way.

If everyone knows that Israel's ratio of military expenditure to total population tops the list of the world's countries and that it continues to endanger peace and squander money on developing and modernizing its weapons to impose peace on its own terms, then the recent American stand on the Golan Heights both surprises and dismays us. The U.S. Administration will not be forgiven for the justifications that some sides are using, such as internal pressures and preparations for the coming elections in two years' time.

Mubarak Arrives, Holds Talks With al-Asad

JN2812114894 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad arrived in Alexandria today on a visit to the Arab Republic of Egypt. Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak led those who received him at al-Nuzhah airport in Alexandria. Also present were senior Egyptian officials and Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid.

President Mubarak and President Hafiz al-Asad left for the al-Muntazah palace where they held a meeting.

President al-Asad is accompanied by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Mubarak Says Jordan 'Reneging' on Syrian Deal

NC2812134494 Paris AFP in English 1302 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kuwait City, Dec 28 (AFP)—Egyptian President Husni Mubarak has accused Jordan of reneging on an agreement with Syria not to break ranks in peace talks with Israel.

"Syria and Jordan had agreed to sign peace with Israel at the same time," Mubarak said in an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-WATAN published on Wednesday [28 December].

"But Amman concluded it separately, stirring Syrian reservations," the Egyptian leader said, referring to the Jordan-Israel peace treaty signed on October 26.

Mubarak, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia were to meet Wednesday in Egypt.

They were to discuss Syrian concerns that Arab countries were moving too fast toward normalization with Israel, according to a Saudi official who asked not to be named.

25,000 Said Trained in 'Terrorism' in Libya

NC2812075794 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 22 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Knowledgeable Libyan sources have disclosed that 25,000 Egyptians were trained in terrorist activities in Libya during the 1970's when relations between Egypt and Libya were at a low point. They were trained by Libya to carry out acts of sabotage in Egypt. Libya refused to hand over a list containing the names of the terrorists after the return of Egyptian-Libyan relations.

Libya Reportedly Mediating Dispute With Sudan

NC2812075894 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 23 Dec 94 p 1

[Report by 'Abd-al-Nabi 'Abd-al-Sattar]

[FBIS Translated Text] Libya has resumed its mediation efforts between Egypt and Sudan to alleviate tension between the two countries. An Arab diplomatic source in Cairo has reiterated that Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi is currently endeavoring to convince Cairo to convene an urgent meeting between the Egyptian and Sudanese foreign ministers. The meeting, according to an Arab source, is aimed at arranging a summit meeting between Presidents Husni Mubarak and 'Umar al-Bashir.

Problems in Reaching Unity Among Arabs Noted

NC2812084494 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 19 Dec 94 p 8

[From the "Close Up" column by Salamah Ahmad Salamah: "Ghosts are an Arab phenomenon"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Arab reconciliation efforts were expected to witness a step forward on the sidelines of the Islamic Conference Organization summit meetings. Hopes were quite high that an Arab summit would meet and the atmosphere would be cleared, or at least the appropriate bases for restoring normal relations between the Arab countries would be set, even if gradually.

However, hopes are one thing and the Arab reality is another. Perhaps it was better for us to believe the saying that has been repeated often recently—reaching an understanding with Israel is easier for the Arabs than reaching an understanding among themselves. A verse of an old Arab poem saying something to the effect that relatives are harsher on each other than strangers are continues to be the principle that governs Arab political ideology at the end of the 20th century. This is what prompted a renowned Kuwiati thinker to claim that reforming the Arab house—meaning the Arab League—will not be possible as long as one of the rooms of this house is haunted by a ghost that frightens everyone it appears to. The belief was that this phenomenon of ghosts had disappeared from Arab thinking; unfortunately, it still exists.

For this reason, the problem of the conflict over removing the effects of the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait and the positive Iraqi stand declaring recognition of the state of Kuwait and its borders remains without solution. The American viewpoint—and we do not mean the Kuwaiti viewpoint—prevailed during the summit. This viewpoint applied pressure to prevent the Islamic summit from issuing any resolution that might hint at lifting sanctions on Iraq even after it implements all Security Council resolutions. Despite the fact that Egypt, Morocco, and some other Arab countries exerted strong efforts to convene an Arab summit, the logic of these ghosts overpowered the logic of reason and interest. This happened out of the fear that the proposed Arab summit will be transformed into an arena for argument and fighting rather than reconciliation and accord. Now, the Arabs always have to wait for a starting signal and signs of satisfaction to appear from America regarding all that relates to their issues.

With respect to the Jerusalem matter, King Husayn returned to his country quite angry, after the summit gave some consideration to 'Arafat when it affirmed the need to return holy Jerusalem to Palestinian sovereignty. The summit did not accept Jordan's demands to give it the right of religious custodianship over Jerusalem. The decision did not venture any further than this in order not to openly confront some countries, such as the United States, which is preparing to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Libya was a bit luckier than Iraq when the summit approved its decision regarding the Lockerbie crisis and supported the Arab League's decision to search for a peaceful solution to prevent escalation of the situation and increase the tension in the region. The summit asked the United States to stop its threats and provocations against Libya.

Then came the stand al-Bashir took when he attacked Egypt in order to realize his objective of perpetuating the split between Egypt and Sudan and keeping the Arabs as they are in a state of fragmentation and frailty.

Bahraini Defense Minister Leaves

NC2812114594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 28 Dec (MENA)—Staff Lt. Gen. Khalifah Bin-Ahmad Al Khalifah, Bahraini defense minister and deputy commander-in-chief of the armed forces, left Cairo today after a two-day visit during which he was received by President Husni Mubarak.

During his stay in Cairo, the Bahraini defense minister visited the International Arab Optical Industries Company and Military Factory No. 200. He also visited the college of commanders and staffs.

Minister, Vietnamese Official Discuss Cooperation

NC2412181894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources Dr. Ibrahim Fawzi met today with Nguyen Min Tung [name as transliterated], Vietnamese deputy minister of light industries, who is currently visiting Cairo.

Dr. Fawzi said that at the meeting they focused on setting up joint industrial projects between the two countries, the possibility of reducing [words indistinct], and boosting cooperation.

He added that they discussed setting up a joint project for textiles and ready-made clothes in Egypt and another project for the furniture industry in Vietnam.

He noted that he had also suggested the possibility of Egyptian banks offering facilities to finance joint projects and meeting the Vietnamese market's demands for ferrous products, especially Egyptian steel reinforcement.

Dr. Fawzi said he reviewed the Egyptian contractors' prospects for carrying out infrastructure projects in

Vietnam and the Egyptian industry's experiment in setting up five sugar factories in Iran and electricity towers in Indonesia.

Electricity Minister Meets Kuwaiti Counterpart

NC2512143894 Cairo MENA in English 1224 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 25 (MENA)—Minister of electricity and energy Maher Abaza, today received Kuwaiti minister of electricity, water and transport Jasim al-'Awn, currently visiting here leading a technical delegation.

They discussed means to promote technical and technological cooperation among research centres in Egypt, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in order to carry out projects of generating new and renewable electricity.

Mahir Abazah said cooperation aims at making use of technical expertise and cadres in the three countries to implement energy plans in them.

The meeting covered the outcome of meetings, of the ministers of electricity and energy of the Gulf cooperation council, held recently in al-Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, he added.

Minister Ghali on Settling Foreign Debts

NC2612222694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2055 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 26 Dec (MENA)—Minister of State for International Cooperation Dr. Yusuf Butrus Ghali addressed the Consultative Council's Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee this evening. He said Egypt's foreign debts amounting to approximately $31.18 billion will be settled in 2043 and thus Egypt's debt problems will be completely over.

He added that Egypt today is fully able to handle the debts and their burdens without any effect on the Egyptian economy and exchange rates. He noted that a third portion of Egypt's debts will be dropped, a measure that will boost the economy and completely solve the problems of Egypt's foreign debt.

He said the problem of foreign debt will be dealt with through economic reform which will raise the living standard by enhancing the performance of manpower and raising its productivity which will create a balance between prices and wages. [passage omitted]

Ghali pointed out that a 43-percent reduction of debt was needed to solve the Egyptian debt problem but we obtained more than this percentage, so the onus is on Egypt itself to solve the remaining problems by continuing the development process. He announced that Egypt will never go back to the Paris Club again to reschedule any debts. [passage omitted]

Mubarak Address Read at Development Conference

NC2712115594 Cairo MENA in English 1058 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 27 (MENA)—Development simply means collective efforts in the various sectors to increase the gross national product in order to provide growth requirements and meet the needs of the masses, President Husni Mubarak said today in his address before the conference on energy and continuous development in Egypt, Egypt 2000, read out by minister of electricity Mahir Abazah.

It is necessary to realize a balance between the needs and the prices of products and services in accordance with economic conditions and changes, he said.

Providing requirements of growth to realize a balance between needs and prices is based mainly on the sources of income and the ability to provide production elements and make best use of its natural and human resources, President Mubarak said in his speech.

The Core and Crux of economic development is industrialization and promoting agriculture. Lack of energy would lead to an inability to meet the requirements of any plan and would have a negative impact on the standard of living of the people, the president added.

Port Said Airport Reopens After 27 Years

NC2412113794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—An Egypt Air plane left for the al-Jamil airport in Port Said this morning—the first flight to the airport, which has been closed for over 27 years.

The airport renovations cost approximately 30 millions Egyptian pounds, shared equally by the Civil Aviation Authority and Port Said Governorate.

Military Demands Death for Murder Suspects

NC2412171494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1540 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—The Military Prosecution has demanded the death penalty for five suspects in the attempted murder of prominent writer Najib Mahfuz. The case involves 16 defendants.

In its presentation at the Higher Military Court today, the Military Prosecution asked for the execution of the first defendant, 21-year-old Muhammad Naji, who has an agricultural degree; the second defendant, 24-year-old 'Amr Ibrahim, who has an air conditioning diploma; the third defendant, 22-year-old Muhammad Khudayr Abu-al-Farah al-Mahallawi, a student at the Technical Institute; the fourth defendant, 20-year-old Husayn 'Ali Bakr, a secondary business school student; and the 10th defendant, 25-year-old Yasir Abu-'Itah, a senior year medical student. The Prosecution also demanded the maximum penalty for the rest of the defendants.

The Prosecution asked the jury not to show mercy to the defendants, who had sought to subvert the country using murder and terrorism to achieve their illegitimate goals. The prosecution explained that the suspects were brought to trial because they had committed specific crimes and not for political reasons. [passage omitted]

The prosecution noted that this case involves a group calling itself al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [the Islamic Group], which seeks to cause instability by assassinating important personalities and undermining tourism to incite people against the regime.

The Military Prosecution affirmed that the defendants gave detailed confessions without duress and that they admitted their main aim was to topple the government.

The prosecution asserted that there is detailed substantial evidence about these defendants' membership in the organization, their criminal collaboration, and their possession of weapons and explosives. [passage omitted]

The prosecution said a large quantity of weapons and explosives—three handguns, 46 pistol magazines, 97 bullets, knives, and gun powder—had been seized and confiscated from the defendants' homes. The prosecution noted that the figures are correct and consistent with the defendants' confessions and prosecution's investigations and that the defendants obtained the weapons to undermine public order.

The Higher Military Court listened to one defense witness who explained how the eighth defendant, Mustafa 'Abd-al-Baqi, was arrested while he was in her house painting it.

The court adjourned the hearing until Tuesday [27 December] when it will hear the defense argument.

Group Calls For Release of Opposition Leader

NC2612223194 Paris AFP in English 2208 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 26 (AFP)—The Egyptian Human Rights Organisation on Monday [26 December] called for the release of an Islamic opposition leader, detained since Saturday for spreading fundamentalist ideas.

'Adil Husayn, secretary general of the Labour Party and a writer, had his custody extended by two weeks on Sunday.

The organisation described his arrest as a "serious violation of freedom of expression and of the press," and demanded his release and an end to his interrogation by the prosecutor general of Cairo's high security court.

It also urged the government to transfer 62-year-old Husayn to hospital as he suffers from a heart complaint. Husayn was alleged to have brought inflammatory anti-government leaflets with him on a flight from London via Paris in October.

The authorities said the leaflets, found on his seat on the plane, were issued by the outlawed al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah fundamentalist group.

The prosecutor general said Husayn had links with exiled al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah leaders in Europe and planned to publish the leaflets in the Labour Party newspaper AL-SHA'B.

Husayn told AFP Saturday he had nothing to do with the leaflets and believed his detention was due to his "articles hostile to the government."

Opposition parties charged Monday that "political motives" lay behind Husayn's arrest.

Mustafa Kamil Murad, head of the Liberal Party, called on President Husni Mubarak to "intervene to end measures taken against the opposition press."

Dia'-al-Din Dawud, leader of the Nasirite Party, said Husayn's arrest "has no security dimension but comes as part of attempts to silence the opposition."

Several AL-SHA'B journalists, including Chief Editor Majdi Husayn, have been summoned by state prosecutors this year for publishing articles "harmful to social peace and state security."

Islamic militants launched a violent campaign in March 1992 aimed at toppling the secularist government of President Husni Mubarak. Nearly 540 people have died in the unrest.

Labor Party Official Remanded in Custody

NC2512190994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1705 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Dec (MENA)—Counselor Hisham Saraya, attorney general for the Higher State Security Prosecution, has decided to remand Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn in custody for 15 days pending the prosecution's investigations of him.

The prosecution charged him with possessing antiregime leaflets advocating extremist ideas; they were seized with him on his arrival at Cairo Airport from abroad last October.

Meanwhile, the Higher State Security Prosecution today began investigating 'Adil Husayn in connection with a Ministry of Defense report against him about an article he wrote in AL-SHA'B. In the article, Husayn alleged that there are U.S. military bases in Sinai and that the United states is requesting new bases.

The Ministry of Defense stated that the claim is baseless. The prosecution decided to continue the investigation with Husayn on this issue next Wednesday [28 December].

Saudi Arabia

Egyptian Foreign Minister Arrives for Meetings

Musa Heads Delegation

LD2312194894 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1815 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 23 Dec—Egyptian Foreign Minister His Excellency 'Amr Musa arrived in Riyadh this evening to chair his country's delegation at the meetings of the 6th session of the Saudi-Egyptian joint committee, which is to start its meetings in Riyadh tomorrow.

He was welcomed on arrival at King Khalid International Airport by Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, Ma'mun Kurdi, director of the Economic Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Professor Muhammad Fathi al-Shadhili, Egyptian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, and a number of officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Crown Prince Receives Musa

LD2412120394 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1158 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 24 Dec SPA—His Royal Highness Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, chairman of the Council of Ministers and commander of the National Guard, today received in his office at the Royal Court in al-Yamama Palace His Excellency 'Amr Musa, foreign minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt. [passage omitted]

Musa, Counterpart Preview Talks

LD2412132394 Riyadh SPA in English 1237 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Dec 24, SPA—Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister, said here last night that the meetings of the Saudi-Egyptian joint commission would provide a good opportunity to enhance bilateral relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

In a press statement at his meeting with his Egyptian counterpart 'Amr Musa, Prince Sa'ud said the leaders of the kingdom and Egypt are keen on further enhancing bilateral relations.

The joint commission, established by Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, has accomplished great achievements, he said.

It is hoped that the commission will further take effective measures to boost bilateral relations at the economic, political, cultural and scientific levels, he added.

For his part, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa underscored the significant role that might by played by the joint Saudi-Egyptian commission in the field of enhancing bilateral relations.

We are hopeful that the joint commission, at its sixth session, will give a momentum towards the path of solidarity, integration and Arab cooperation, he said.

He pointed out that the meetings of the joint commission would provide a good opportunity to consultation over the situation in the Arab region.

Asked whether Egypt would present an Arab reconciliation initiative following the seventh Islamic summit conference, Musa said "We have never ceased from presenting initiatives that benefit the Arab world, and added "we believe that the best kind of initiatives is the one which paves the way for consultation among the brothers". [no closing quotation marks as received]

On Egypt's evaluation to the outcome of the Gulf summit conference, Musa said "The meeting of the Arab leaders in any part of the Arab world will, no doubt, give an impetus to the Arab solidarity" and added "we feel that this summit will further boost the Arab solidarity".

Asked whether the meetings would review the situation of the Palestinians in the occupied territories, Musa said "the Palestinians in the occupied territories are in need of a continuous political and material support, and this issue is always taken into account".

Cooperation Talks Begin

LD2412152194 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1430 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The meetings of the 6th session of the joint Saudi-Egyptian committee for bilateral cooperation have started this morning at the headquarters of the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign affairs minister, headed the Saudi side, while His Excellency 'Amr Musa, foreign affairs minister, headed the Egyptian side.

On the other hand, His Excellency Shaykh Muhammad Aba-al-Khayl, the finance and national economy minister met at his excellency's office this afternoon His Excellency Mahmud Muhammad Mahmud Bayyumi, the economy and foreign trade minister in the Arab Republic of Egypt on the sidelines of the meetings of the joint Saudi-Egyptian committee.

Musa Gives News Conference

NC2512141594 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has expressed his satisfaction with the outcome of meetings of the Egyptian-Saudi Committee for Bilateral Cooperation on various aspects of relations between the two fraternal countries at the end of the committee's seventh session in Riyadh.

At a news conference at the Saudi Foreign Ministry before noon today, Musa noted that the volume of trade between the two countries has increased by 600 percent in the last five years and that Saudi investments have increased and now lead Arab investments in Egypt.

He added: But this is not enough. We want to double trade and investment between the two countries.

At the news conference, in which he touched on Arab, Islamic, and world issues, Musa said the next meeting of the Damascus Declaration countries will be held during the first week of February. He added that there is no contradiction between Egypt's communication with the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] and its membership in the Damascus Declaration just as there is no contradiction between the Gulf Cooperation Council states' membership in the council and their membership in the Declaration.

He affirmed that Egypt's request for membership in the AMU as an observer stemmed from the desire of Egypt and the Arab Maghreb countries for communication among the north African states, noting that Egypt's western borders are adjacent to the AMU.

He noted that there should be cooperation and communication between Arabs in the east and west because all are members in the Arab League.

More on News Conference

LD2512195894 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1742 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 25 Dec SPA—Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, who led the Egyptian side to the joint commission for bilateral cooperation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, described his meetings with King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, His Royal Highness Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, deputy prime minister and commander of the national guard, as important. He said that during these meetings consultation took place on the various issues of common interest to the two fraternal countries and with which Arab public opinion is concerned.

This was mentioned in a brief speech with which he started his news conference, which he held at the headquarters of the Foreign Ministry today. [passage omitted]

With regard to the issue of the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates [UAE], Minister 'Amr Musa said: "Our stance is known. We supported the UAE's position, and we back its stance regarding the need to complete its sovereignty on those islands."

He also stressed that terrorism and the use of violence was unacceptable. He called on governments to stand forcefully against the criminal acts and described extremism as being intellectual waves that come and go, saying that extremism is no longer present only in the Islamic Arab world but also over the whole world.

He denied that his country had supported the proposal that the Islamic sites in Jerusalem would be supervised by an Islamic commission affiliated with the Islamic Conference Organization and said: "This is not true."

During the news conference, his excellency the foreign minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt talked about the the Middle East peace negotiations, particularly concerning the Syrian-Israeli and the Lebanese-Israeli tracks, Egyptian-American relations, and the Serb aggression against the Bosnian people. He also dealt with the fighting taking place between Russia and Chechnya and some other issues.

Musa Denies Syrian-Israeli Talks Deadlocked

NC2512165194 Paris AFP in English 1545 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Dec 25 (AFP)—Egypt is ready to help push forward peace talks between Syria and Israel, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said here Sunday [25 December], denying reports that the negotiations were deadlocked.

"Discussions are going on in Washington. There is no need to despair—we want the Syrian-Israeli track of the negotiations to make more rapid progress," Musa told reporters before leaving Riyadh, where he co-chaired Egyptian-Saudi economic talks.

Senior Israeli and Syrian military officials held discreet talks in Washington Thursday and Friday in an attempt to pave the way for a resumption of formal negotiations between the two countries, suspended since the February 25 Hebron mosque massacre.

Musa said Egypt had "approached the Syrians and is in contact with US diplomats on this issue." Egypt remained "at the disposal of all parties" to help push forward the talks, he added.

Syria and Israel disagree over the scope and timing of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, seized in 1967, as well as the type of peaceful relations to be established.

Syria Sunday rejected an Israeli demand to keep observation posts on strategic points in the Golan Heights after a withdrawal by the Jewish state.

"Israel seeks to derail or torpedo the peace process. Its demand to keep strategic points ignores the fact that a complete withdrawal from occupied land means no Israeli presence on it," the ruling Ba'th party newspaper said.

Musa also said Egypt was firmly opposed to any attempts to delay implementation of the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles on Palestinian autonomy signed in September last year.

"The Israeli army must withdraw from the West Bank so that the Palestinians can hold elections (to an autonomy council) and there is no excuse for any delay or obstacles," he said.

Musa and his Saudi counterpart Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal co-chaired a meeting here of the joint cooperation committee aimed at boosting economic ties.

Saudi-Egyptian trade is currently put at some 393 million dollars.

The officials also discussed the conditions of some 1.3 million Egyptians working in the kingdom.

In the past few weeks the Saudi authorities have sent home several thousand Egyptians who did not have work or residence permits and wanted to stay on tourist visas.

Musa Lectures at Foreign Ministry Institute

NC2512173494 Cairo MENA in English 1640 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Dec 25 (MENA)—Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has called for holding a dialogue embracing all Arab countries to debate the new regional order.

In his lecture today at the Foreign Ministry Diplomatic Institute, Musa said "We as Arabs are now facing critical developments". Explaining, he said that in the past we had confronted severe hardships but at that time the situation was dear: either war or peace, black or white or a growing economy or a sabotaged one.

Today we have on our hands a mercurial situation with a variety of colours and possibilities, he said.

He urged Arab states to make up their mind and determine the path they should pursue. We must create a consensus of opinion on the future of the region, he said.

On the future of the region, Musa said we should seek to reach a just peace for all parties concerned, with emphasis on the Palestinians.

If we want to bring about an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict we then should first establish an Arab-Arab peace, he said.

We should also create common interests and move to link various parts of the Arab world from east and west, he said adding that the realization of development in the region hinges on a base of common interests.

Musa asserted that regional cooperation should not thrive on the ruins of the Arab League, the Arab organization which he described as the home of all Arabs.

We will support the Arab League and develop it to render it more capable of dealing with new challenges, he said emphasizing that there is no other acceptable alternative to the League.

Cooperation Statement Issued

LD2512211894 Riyadh SPA in English 1941 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Dec 25, SPA—The Saudi/Egyptian joint commission for bilateral cooperation wound up a two-day meeting in Riyadh on Saturday [24 December] in the framework of the fraternal and close ties between the two countries.

A press statement issued at the end of the meeting said the commission held its sixth session in the framework of the wise directives of custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-'al-'Aziz and H.E. President Husni Mubarak and the agreement they signed during the historical visit to Egypt by King Fahd on March 1989 on the establishment of the joint commission. The Saudi side was chaired by Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister and the Egyptian side by 'Amr Musa the foreign minister.

From the Egyptian side the meeting was attended by Mahmud Mohammad Mahmud, the minister of economy and foreign trade and Dr Muhi Uddin Ghareeb, chairman of the executive body of investment organization. From the Saudi side it was attended by Muhammad Aba-al-Khayl, the minister of finance and national economy along with a number of senior officials of the concerned bodies of both sides.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed political issues of mutual interest and exchanged views on a number of items with the aim of realisation of the best interests of the two peoples and the entire Arab nation including economic, commercial, investment, industrial, cultural, information, technical, youth and sports, health and manpower aspects and they passed a reports prepared by the preparatory committee during a meeting in Cairo on November 28- 30, 1993 and agreed on the following subjects:

—inviting the technical committee formed on bases of Article 22 of the economic, commercial, investment and technical committee cooperation agreement for a meeting next March to consider adding new commodities to the list of customs exempted items of the two sides.

—allowing the Egypt Petrolub to import production requirements in the framework of the Egyptian applied regulations.

—endorsement of the standards'principles for the commodities being exchanged between the two countries.

—the commission blessed implementation of the cooperation agreement on veterinary, livestock and research including the exchange of data, experts and research between the two sides.

—approval of a number of measures concering facilitation of cars and trucks passage through the two countries on equal bases.

—the commission welcomed the start of the new shipping line between the Saudi port of Dhuba and the Egyptian port of Safaja and the subcommittee for trasport and communication was called to review ways to facilitate the shipping and transit procedures at the two ports and that the ships of the two countries would receive similar treatment on both sides.

—the two sides agreed to increase the capacity of the Egyptian ground coastal station of "Maadi 1" for passing the Saudi telephone and telex service to the Saudi ships sailing on the Atlantic Ocean and the commission decided the reduction of the telephone calls between the Kingdom and Egypt.

—the commission welcomed the completion of an executive programme for cultural cooperation worked out by the Egyptian Ministry of Culture and the Saudi Youth Welfare General Presidency in the frame-work of the cultural cooperation agreement signed in Cairo on April 19, 1971 and also welcomed completion of a draft agreement for bilateral cooperation on youth and sports fields.

—the commission reviewed prospects on possible cooperation between the Saudi Royal Commission for Jubail and Yanbu and faculties of medicine of the Egyptian universities on medical and scientific areas.

The commission also agreed to accelerate cooperation between the two sides on scientific research, satellite communication and wildlife conservation and environmental fields.

The commission thanked the Kingdom for the distinguished care being awarded for the Egyptian expatriates working in the Kingdom and highlighted the role undertaken by the council of the Saudi/Egyptian businessmen for promoting the two-way trade. They agreed that the next meeting would be held in Cairo on December 1995/January 1996.

Foreign Ministers Comment on Meetings

LD2512204894 Riyadh SPA in English 1924 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Dec 25, SPA—Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal Al Sa'ud and his Egyptian counterpart 'Amr Musa have reiterated that the meetings of the Saudi-Egyptian joint commission have yielded positive results.

Following the signing of the minutes of the meetings of the joint commission's sixth session here today, Prince Sa'ud said 'We are working in the light of a well arranged plan and we are hopeful that our efforts will yield positive results and meet the ambitions of the leaders of the two countries and serve the interests of the two fraternal nations'.

The nature of the Saudi-Egyptian relations, which are characterized with continuity, indicates that the two countries have identical views on all issues', said Prince Sa'ud.

For his part 'Amr Musa said 'There is an inalterable trend towards boosting bilateral relations, consultation and coordination in the various spheres'.

We highly evaluate the agreement because it is a part of series of agreements worked by the Saudi-Egyptian joint commission, he added.

Musa, Delegation Depart

LD2512184194 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1625 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 25 Dec SPA—Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and the delegation accompanying him left Riyadh this afternoon after the meetings of the sixth session of the Saudi-Egyptian joint commission. [passage omitted]

Press Hails Ties With Egypt

LD2512131894 Riyadh SPA in English 1237 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Dec 25, SPA—Saudi Arabic language newspapers published in the kingdom commented editorially today on several prominent issues, notably Egyptian-Saudi relations and Iranian extremism.

Jeddah-based AL-BILAD said regular meetings of the Saudi-Egyptian ministerial commission reflect the depth of ties binding the two countries adding that at a time when inter-Arab relations have not reached the desired level, Egyptian-Saudi ties set a real example of mutual understanding.

Commenting on the Iranian extremism, Al-Dammam-based AL-YAUM said Iranian politicians feed the illusions of their people with dreams of power and expansion, which adds to the problems of the Iranian people and force it into reclusion and confusion.

The paper pointed out that Iranian regime has an opportunity to be honest with itself after the recent GCC summit made clear its goals and dealt frankly with regional problems.

Jeddah-based 'UKAZ said the Iraqi regime was making conspicuous, desperate attempts to evade international resolutions but stressed that such manouvres would not do any good, in fact they would only add to the suffering of the Iraqi people.

It said the Baghdad regime was selling the suffering of its people, even though it is responsible for this suffering and the crises of the Arab region as a whole.

Mecca-based AL-NADWA said the Islamic crises in Bosnia and Chechnya are witness to the extent to which the international community has come to ignore the rights of Muslims and even conspire against them.

King Fahd Departs for Visit to Egypt

LD2812125194 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1223 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 28 Dec (SPA)—With the protection and care of God, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, this afternoon left Riyadh for the Arab Republic of Egypt. [passage omitted]

Yemen's al-Ahmar Discusses Purpose of Visit

NC2712082794 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 27 Dec 94

[Telephone interview with Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives, in Riyadh, by Fawzi al-Jundi, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Jundi] Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Ahmar] Thank you.

[Al-Jundi] What are the objectives of your current visit to Saudi Arabia and your meeting with the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz?

[Al-Ahmar] The visit is part of an effort to return things to normal between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, achieve further sincere cooperation, and remove all blemishes and past clouds. Praise be to God, His Majesty King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz showed good heartedness, magnanimity, full readiness, and great eagerness to settle all things, amend all fences, return things to normal, and restore cooperation between the Yemeni and Saudi peoples in the interest and for the well-being of the two countries.

[Al-Jundi] Shaykh al-Ahmar, Saudi Arabia has stressed its eagerness to maintain good relations with the Republic of Yemen, and this has largely helped calm the tension on the Saudi-Yemeni border. Have you sensed during your meeting with the custodian of the two holy mosques a clear Saudi vision to fully settle the border dispute and resume the work of the joint committee on the demarcation of border?

[Al-Ahmar] Yes. We found with his majesty what is even more than that, his determination to settle all issues, correct all things, and strengthen fraternal ties and serious and fruitful cooperation in the interest of the two countries. This is what we found with His Majesty King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, may God protect him.

[Al-Jundi] In light of this positive development, can it be said that there will be a forthcoming meeting between the custodian of the two holy mosques and Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih?

[Al-Ahmar] Yes, this is what His Majesty King Fahd conveyed through me. He emphasized his invitation to President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to visit soon, God willing.

[Al-Jundi] Have you agreed on a date for the visit?

[Al-Ahmar] It will take place soon, God willing. The date will be set later, when I return to Yemen. Contacts between his majesty and President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih take place from time to time over the telephone. [passage omitted]

Government Calls For End to Chechnya Hostilities

LD2712124294 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 27 Dec 94

[Statement by "an official source" to the Saudi news agency; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Saudi Arabia is monitoring with concern the regrettable developments in the region of Chechnya and the hostilities arising from these developments, causing several human victims and considerable material damage.

The source said that proceeding from its concern to avoid further victims and damage, the government of the custodian of the two holy mosques is calling for end to the fighting and bloodshed and for peaceful means to be adopted in addressing the Chechen crisis.

Paper Condemns Western 'Silence' on Chechen War

LD2512114694 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0318 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 25 Dec—Writing about the war that has been going on in the Muslim soil of Chechnya, the newspaper AL-MADINAH emphasizes that the West has been silent about this issue, despite the fact that it has been singing the praises of human rights. This is because the West is agreed that the time has not yet come to dismember the Russian Federation; hence they consider what is happening in Chechnya to be an internal Russian affair.

The paper recalls the Western stand when the Western media devoted most of its attention to what it then called the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel, well over 20 years ago. At that time they did not consider the matter an internal Soviet affair, even though Jews formed no more than 1.5 percent of the population of the Soviet Union.

The paper describes the Western silence about Russia's behavior in Chechnya as an ethical crime which hits a blind spot in the West's conscience.

The paper explains that this attitude shows clear discrimination and a blatant alignment against Islam.

The paper demands that the Islamic nation act in order to rescue Muslim lands, Muslim lives, and Muslim honor. It stresses that this would not be interference in a Russian domestic matter, and that silence is not a solution to the problems of Chechnya, because Muslim are being killed in full view of all Muslims and this simply means that more crimes are being committed against Islam and Muslims.

Barzani, Talabani Supporters Clash in North

Fighting Between Factions Detailed

JN2412110894 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0745 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 24 Dec (INA)—Fighting broke out yesterday and the day before between rival supporters of the renegades Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani.

Citing a correspondent close to the scene of the battles, AL-JUMHURIYAH said yesterday's clashes in Shaqlawah, in which various types of weapons were used, led to the destruction of the renegade Talabani's home and the offices of four followers. The clashes are said to have left 17 people dead and over 250 gunmen wounded, including two military members of the so-called Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

The clashes left the gunmen of the renegade Barzani in control of Shaqlawah District and al-Hajj 'Umar Anu, Guman, Sadiq, Harir, and Salah-al-Din areas. Barzani's men deployed a large force led by Fadil Mirani to the Kah Sinzan area close to Kou Senjaq to forestall the Talabani forces and block the only access road to al-Sulaymaniyah.

The Barzani followers yesterday reportedly mounted a major attack on the Bizhiyan complex close to (?the control post of Irbil near) the Salah al-Din summer resort, the scene of a battle in which light and medium arms were used and 23 Talabani men lost their lives. The Barzani men also seized Talabani cars and torched scores of homes. The Barzani men set out to cleanse the region from the Talabani men.

The paper pointed out that the rival factions fought battles in isolated pockets in the Jumjumah, Panjwin, and Qal'at Dizah Districts. The fighting left five offices of the Barzani camp burned or destroyed and 25 persons dead in Jumjumah.

Over the past two days, citizens of the Irbil Governorte, who are worried that the fighting may spread to Irbil itself, have been bracing to flee the city. Irbil is said to be gripped by fear of the sight of supporters of the two rival factions perched over rooftops and deployed on the streets and alleys. They have been on an alert footing since fighting erupted in other areas. Shops were shuttered after their shelves were cleared by their proprietors. Food and fuel prices are said to have shot up to fantastic levels.

The paper said that the renegade Mas'ud Barzani set up a special operations room in the Surrah Rash area to take personal command of the battles with the beleaguered followers of Talabani in Irbil. Talabani was said to be frustrated, having failed to find a way out to his original headquarters in Qal'ah Chulan in al-Sulaymaniyah.

Observers in Irbil point out that Talabani will stay in the city for fear that Barzani's men, who are on the lookout for him, may spot and kill him.

Forty Said Killed; 250 Wounded

NC2412114094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1030 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 24 Dec [MENA]—Reports from the autonomous area in northern Iraq indicate that the fighting still rages in several areas for the third day in a row, without any sign of a ceasefire between gunmen belonging to the two major parties, the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, led by Mas'ud al-Barazani, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, led by Jalal Talabani.

The reports indicate that 40 persons were killed and 250 wounded in the past few days, in addition to damage inflicted on a number of party headquarters.

According to the reports, al-Barzani's group took over the area of Qada' Shaqlawah, Hajj 'Umran, and Salah-al-Din resort up to Irbil in northern Iraq.

Moreover al-Barzani's gunmen launched a fierce assault against the "Birzayn" complex, close to the Irbil-Salah-al-Din point, where clashes raged with light caliber weapons and artillery. Twenty three of Talabani's gunmen were killed in the clashes, and their cars were seized. Scores of homes were burned.

According to the reports, al-Barzani's group launched the assault to drive Talabani's men out of the region. Moreover, clashes ensued elsewhere between al-Barzani's group, supported by the pro-Iranian Islamic Movement Party and Talabani's men. Another 25 gunmen were killed in these clashes.

Reports add that the inhabitants of Irbil in northern Iraq packed their belongings in the past few days to prepare to leave. Shops closed their doors in the area of Irbil, and oil and food prices rose astronomically.

The reports describe the rapid development of the situation in northern Iraq as worrying.

'Pitched Battle' To Control Main Road

NC2612092594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0805 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Dec (MENA)—Reports reaching Baghdad from the autonomous region of Kurdistan in northern Iraq say fighting is still continuing between rival armed men from the Mas'ud Barzani-led Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] and the Jalal Talabani-led Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK].

The reports say fighting intensified last night, with both sides using all kinds of large-, medium-, and light-caliber weapons.

The Voice of Kurdistan radio, heard in Baghdad, said a pitched battle is now taking place along the strategic road linking Irbil with Shaqlawah, Rawandoz, and Hajj 'Umran up to the Iraqi-Iranian border.

The radio quoted Sami 'Abd-al-Rahman, KDP Political Bureau member, as saying that the Talabani group is trying to block the road in the face of the Barzani forces, which control Irbil and Dahuk up to the Iraqi-Turkish border.

'Abd-al-Rahman said KDP followers confronted the attackers and forced the Talabani men to retreat and seek additional forces to reinforce their positions.

It is known that the Talabani armed men fully control the areas of Kifri, Klar, and Barbandkhan [name as received] in al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate, 250-km north of the Iraqi capital, Baghdad.

On PUK accusations that the KDP takes for itself the custom duties imposed on Turkish trucks that pass through the Ibrahim al-Khalil Bridge in Zakho, 'Abd-al-Rahman said the accusations are nothing but an attempt to justify the Talabani group's violation of the recent peace agreement between the two sides, which prohibits fighting among the Kurdish parties in northern Iraq.

It should be noted that between 500 and 700 Turkish trucks cross the bridge daily loaded with foodstuffs for Iraqi traders in Mosul; they return loaded with oil products.

Renewed Fighting Follows Short Truce

JN2612111194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0708 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Dec (INA)—Violent battles renewed in Iraqi Kurdistan between the gangs of [Mas'ud] Barzani and [Jalal] Talabani following a short fragile truce.

The government newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH said today that the fighting concentrated in Shaqlawah, Salah al-Din, Khalifan, Spilik, Dasht Harir [name as transliterated] and Hajj 'Umran opposite the Diyanah area. Barzani's gangs managed to liquidate elements affiliated to Talabani in all these areas after they took control of them.

The newspaper said a number of citizens were killed or injured as a result of the shells that fell on their houses. Travelers from the region said they saw a large number of bodies in the streets and alleys of Qirawah and Shurush in central Irbil.

Citizens in Shaqlawah staged a demonstration last Friday to condemn the criminal actions by the cliques of agents Barzani and Talabani, and raised banners calling for the return of the national authority to the region.

Further on Continuing Clashes

LD2612153194 Tehran IRNA in English 1447 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanandaj, Kurdestan Prov., Dec. 26, IRNA—Bloody clashes between powerful groups in northern Iraq continued Sunday [25 December].

According to informed sources, the clashes have been limited to suburbs of Irbil, the center of self-proclaimed government of Iraqi Kurdestan, but forces of the Patriotic Union and Democratic Party are strengthening their positions.

The groups opposing Saddam Husayn's regime who try to establish a self-proclaimed government in northern Iraq, now and again fight with each other to gain power.

Independent sources have not yet announced the number of casualties of the bloody struggle in northern Iraq.

Masud Barzani and Jalal Talebani, heads of the two opponent groups in a joint communique broadcast on Radio Patriotic Union Sunday, termed the current conflict as a conspiracy masterminded by their enemies.

In the statement, the two leaders reiterated that their objective is to implement the peace agreement and restoration of peace and stability into Iraqi Kurdestan.

The peace agreement was signed between the Patriotic Union of Kurdestan and the Kurdestan Democratic Party.

Announcing its neutrality in the recent conflicts between the two parties, the Islamic Movement Party is at present playing a mediating role.

According to a Kurdish reporter, heavy clashes between the PUK and KDP and the Kurdish Revolutionary Hezbollah are going on in all the regions especially around Guman and Irbil.

He did not elaborate on damages and losses inflicted upon different groups as a result of continuation of the conflict.

After preventing the U.S. and Saddam Husayn's Western allies from entering the region, the opponent groups in Iraqi Kurdestan tried to establish a self-proclaimed government, but the northern Iraq has been the scene of bloody conflicts since then.

'Some 464' Said Killed 25-26 Dec

JN2712104594 Baghdad INA in English 0920 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Dec. 27, INA—Some 464 persons were reported killed on Sunday and Monday [25 and 26 December] when battles raged between [Mas'ud Barzani] and [Jalal] Talabani renegade groups.

During a 12-hour fierce fighting erupted on Monday evening in Kani Kirzala area in Ibril province, 92 pro-Barzani persons were killed, and in retaliation of this massacre, Barzani groups killed more than 45 pro-Talabani persons in the same area.

Fighting Continuing for 5th Day

NC2712120294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1100 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad, 27 Dec (MENA)—For the fifth day fighting continued this morning between the armed groups of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, led by Mas'ud Barzani, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, led by Jalal Talabani, in the autonomous region in northern Iraq.

Reports from the region say that 100 people have been killed and 150 others injured. The clashes are taking place mainly in the regions of Irbil, Shaqlawah, and Salah al-Din.

The reports say that officials of the Kurdish National Congress are currently trying to stop the fighting and prevent further bloodshed. These officials warn against the negative impact of the fighting on the future of the region. [passage omitted]

Proposal To Halt Fighting Reported

NC2712172794 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The follow up committee consisting of Dr. Ahmad al-Shalabi, chairman of the Executive Council of the Unified National Iraqi Congress; Jawhar Namiq Salim, head of the Kurdistan parliament; Dr. Kamal Fu'ad, member of the Political Bureau; and Haydar al-Fayli, representative of the Kurdistan Front, yesterday visited the headquarters of Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

The two sides discussed a number of issues. The members of the committee then submitted a proposal calling on all sides to end the tensions in some parts of the province after Talabani and Barzani approve this proposal.

After the aforementioned committee went back to Irbil, Dr. Ahmad al-Shalabi and Mr. Jawhar Namiq Salim went to the summer resort of Salah al-Din to present the same proposal to Mr. Mas'ud Barzani.

Fighting Reportedly Worsens

NC2712190794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1744 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Dec (MENA)—Arrivals from the self-rule area in north Iraq this evening report that the situation there is worsening as a result of the ongoing fighting between armed groups of the main parties in north Iraq. These arrivals note that foodstuffs have disappeared from the markets in Kurdistan and that the prices of goods in the black markets, which have cropped up in the wake of the fighting, are soaring. They say that demonstrations were staged in the past few hours protesting the deterioration of the economic and security situation in the region.

UN Aid Suspended Due to Infighting

NC2712180094 Paris AFP in English 1354 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Dec 27 (AFP)—Battles raged for the fourth day between rival Kurdish groups in northern Iraq Tuesday [27 December], prompting the United Nations to halt aid deliveries as the Iraqi official press said at least 460 people had been killed.

The fighting between the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) was continuing Tuesday [27 December], UN coordinator in Iraq Muhammad Zijjari told AFP here.

"The situation is completely unstable, the United Nations has suspended temporarily its activities," Zijjari said.

"All aid workers in northern Iraq have been moved away to Irbil," in the center of the Kurdish-controlled region, he said.

The Kurds have relied heavily on UN food and oil supplies since they gained control of northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad in March 1991, following the January-February 1991 Gulf war.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi government newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH said 464 people had been killed Sunday and Monday in northern Iraq, adding that artillery was being used in the fighting.

The toll could not be confirmed from independent sources.

The official Iranian news agency IRNA, quoting witnesses, said Monday at least 70 people had been killed in the clashes since Friday.

On Sunday, PUK leader Jalal Talabani and KDP chief Mas'ud Barzani appealed to their forces to stop fighting.

Paper Views 'Malicious Conspiracy'

JN2712121294 Baghdad INA in English 0940 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Dec. 27, INA—Al-'Iraq paper of Baghdad said the American-Zionist conspiracy against the Kurdistan autonomy region [is] doomed to failure.

In its today article, al-'Iraq added that this malicious conspiracy had no capability of confronting with the tide of reality and history and [that] betting of the enemies on the Kurdish card to undermine Iraq's national unity had been aborted.

The paper was commenting on the fierce fighting raged now between the hireling cliques of Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani in the north of the country.

Al-'Iraq further said that what has been happening, simply means that security, stability and tranquility could not be realised but in the unified homeland and the joint destiny and the work for expelling the traitors and stooges outside the borders.

The fighting raging nowadays in Kurdistan was not out of expectation, but observers were perceiving that differences among the hireling cliques could be erupted in any moment and the affairs could reach the point of no return.

Turkish Planes Raid Behdinan Province in North

NC2712170594 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] An informed source belonging to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan in Behdinan Province reports that two Turkish fighter bombers yesterday carried out two raids on the area of Darkar belonging to Qada' Zakho. The bombing led to the martyrdom of one citizen.

Officers Said Executed for Trying To Flee

NC2712172694 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports have said that the Iraqi regime has executed an officer of staff brigadier general rank along with the crews of three tanks from the al-Madinah al-Munawwarah force, which belongs to the Republican Guard. They were arrested trying to head to Saudi Arabia in the western desert area, where the regime's Republican Guard were carrying out military exercises.

The brigadier general claimed during interrogation that he lost his way because of bad weather conditions. However, the patrol that arrested the group was not convinced by these excuses and the issue was referred to higher authorities. When Saddam heard of the story, he ordered that all of the officers be executed.

Government Said To Arrest 18 in Karkuk; 3 Executed

NC2712171894 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The weekly newspaper AL-MU'TAMAR published yesterday reports that the oppressive security organs belonging to the regime in Karkuk Province arrested 18 people on 3 November on charges that they belong to opposition political factions and that they carried out armed operations against the organs of oppression in Karkuk.

Citing its correspondent, the newspaper confirms that three of the detainees were executed and the rest were given life sentences. The correspondent notes that the campaign of bestial arrests continues in Karkuk. Over 2,600 people have been arrested during the past two months, among them 175 political detainees, who are being held at the Karkuk Security Department.

Citizens in Amman Confirm Ration Card Reductions

JN2712193094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 25 Dec 94 p 10

[Report by Salah Huzayyin in Amman]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Iraqi citizens who arrived [in Amman] recently from Baghdad say the ration cards that are given to citizens and residents of Iraq now include only five food items instead of 10, as was the case in the past. These items are flour, sugar, rice, vegetable oil, and baby milk.

An Iraqi citizen told AL-HAYAH that the distribution of ration cards, which was due to take place in October, has been delayed for two months. This has raised questions about new developments.

The Iraqi Government annually pays in hard currency to subsidize food distributed to citizens and residents of Iraq through the ration cards that are given out every six months, although the government decision says the card is valid for one full year.

Iraqi citizens said the six-month period seems to be linked to the negotiations the Iraqi Government holds with the United Nations on allowing Iraq to export oil to obtain hard currency to pay for food. It is believed the cards will be canceled immediately after Iraq is allowed to export its oil because this would mean the beginning of a return to normal life in Iraq. [passage omitted]

An Iraqi citizen emphasized that the reduction in the new ration card also specified the quantities of each product.

He said: The quantity of shortening distributed monthly has been reduced from 250 grams to 100 grams and flour was reduced from 9.5 kg to 6 kg per family. Rice was reduced from 1.5 kg per individual monthly to 1 kg per family. Sugar was reduced from half a kilogram to one-quarter a kilogram per individual, and tea was reduced from 250 grams to 150 grams per individual.

The Iraqi Government reduced the quantities distributed to citizens by the ration card early in October when vegetable oil was reduced by 125 grams, rice was reduced from 2.5 kg to 1.5 kg, and sugar was reduced from 1.5 kg to 750 grams per individual.

Decree Relieves Agriculture Minister of Post

JN2512174094 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Dec 94

["Text" of Republican Decree No. 425 issued in Baghdad on 25 December]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, most gracious, most merciful.

The Republic of Iraq.

Republican Decree No. 425.

In accordance with the provisions enshrined in Paragraph D of Article 58 of the Constitution, we have decreed the following:

Agriculture Minister Karim Hasan Rida shall be relieved of his post.

Drafted in Baghdad on 22 Rajab 1415 Hegira, corresponding to 25 December 1994 A.D.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic of Iraq

Agriculture Ministry Blamed for Rising Prices

JN2712211294 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 17 Dec 94 p 12

["Above the Red Line" column by Dr. Fawzi Ibrahim al-Mashhadani: "The Agricultural Reality Between Responsibility and Failure"]

[FBIS Translated Text] One could say that agriculture is one of the most important economic sectors, since it provides food security for the citizen by meeting his essential needs for commodities and basic materials, both plant and animal, ensuring the requirements of production such as the industrial crops needed by the food and textile industries, and providing fodder for livestock.

Thus, the leadership has concentrated its attention on the activities dealing with food security. It has directed the efforts of local government and party organs and some other sectors toward fulfilling this task and supervising and following up on all of its activities. The efforts which have been exerted by the Military Industrialization Organization and its affiliate companies in opening up rivers have had a great effect in increasing the cultivated area and resurrecting millions of donums of lands which lay barren in the past.

All this has taken place while the Ministry of Agriculture has stood by as if it is not concerned. The agricultural situation has completely changed from what it was before the 30-state aggression, while the ministry has remained a spectator, simply distributing roles which are related to agricultural agitation [al-tathwir al-zira'i]. Although it has been assigned the role of supervising and following up on agricultural activities, the ministry has not been able to perform even this small role in its capacity as the quarter responsible for the agricultural sector. The result is that its administration has become permeated with several diseases such as widespread bribery, nepotism, and favoritism at the expense of the citizen's food. The ministry has not been able to determine the cultivated area and the portion assigned for the main crops. Moreover, it may have been behind the farmers and peasants who failed to deliver the required portions of their basic agricultural crops, and it may have been the one that found the justifications to exempt them from delivering these portions, a development which has affected self-sufficiency and consequently caused great harm to the citizen. This is why the prices of flour have risen from 10 to 150-160 dinars per one kilogram. The prices of other crops such as crushed wheat have also gone up. As for rice, barley, and maize, we do not want to go into their details, other than saying that their production has dropped to a low level, not exceeding scores of tonnes [as published].

The ministry has also remained inactive on the question of providing seeds. Its strategic plan to provide potato seeds to northwestern Mosul has not seen the light. The Iba' Center for Agricultural Research has made excellent efforts in this regard by making up for the shortage of seeds in the absence of the Ministry of Agriculture. It has become a major center for the production and improvement of seeds. The ministry's role has not gone beyond that of an intermediary to enable some favored and influential people to obtain seeds for the purposes of speculation and trading. The prices of vegetables have sky-rocketed and become a burden on the citizen, because the ministry could not provide the requirements for the cultivation of vegetables. This has created confusion in their prices and enabled farmers to control their flow into the central markets and to dictate their prices due to the Agriculture Ministry's absence and failure to determine the area assigned for the cultivation of vegetables.

Thus, the citizen has also begun to suffer from the great shortage of milk and milk products and from their high prices. Despite the support given to the prices of basic products such as grain and other crops, the requirements of agricultural production and agricultural services have not received similar attention, which could have had a direct effect in increasing production. The suspension of the importation of pesticides and other agricultural requirements has had a direct effect on the quality of agricultural produce. The ministry has not used other alternatives for combating agricultural pests, especially those which attack palm trees, which has resulted in a drop in the production of dates. All this deterioration has taken place while the ministry has remained a spectator.

Citizens Evacuated After CBW Leakage in Babil

JN2612085094 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The government authorities in al-Hillah in the Babil Governorate, have begun a large-scale evacuation of farming families in al-Musayyib, al-Isqandariyah, and (?al-Habwah) after contamination of these areas as a result of chemical and biological radiation [ish'a'at] leakage from secret underground warehouses over which the Sa'd Enterprise of the Military Industrialization Organization was built.

Citizens from al-Hillah said that buses and cars belonging to the Industry Ministry are moving citizens from these areas to [word indistinct] forcing them to live in quickly erected camps that lack the basic amenities and necessary services.

Workers at the Sa'd Enterprise for Military Industrialization were quoted as saying that the leakage resulted from the confusion among the military industrialization officials when they moved the contents of the CBW warehouses to areas in the western desert following reports that UN observers and international inspectors intended to make surprise visits to the establishment and to reveal the secret warehouses.

Eyewitnesses in the region said the government authorities were forcing farmers and displaced people to leave their herds and farms, taking with them only their clothes and personal possessions. This proves that the chemical and bacteria leakage has contaminated livestock and vegetation. This will have dangerous consequences on the future of the region.

Vice President Ramadan Meets PFLP Official

JN2712141594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1245 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Dec (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has received Abu-'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri], assistant secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], and the delegation accompanying him.

During the meeting, Taha Yasin Ramadan said the Arab nation's history is inscribed by steadfast Arab mujahidin who are opposed to subservience, occupation, and capitulation. He noted the convoys of martyrs offered to defend the Arab nation's existence in Arab Palestine and elsewhere in the Arab homeland.

Ramadan added: The great victories the Iraqis have scored under His Excellency President Saddam Husayn and the defeat they have inflicted on the colonialist-Zionist scheme and its various evil links, such as the continued aggression and the unfair embargo, all provide cogent proof of the Arab nation's strength and vitality, and of the rejection of humiliation, capitulation, and colonialism by free Arabs.

For his part, the PFLP assistant secretary general commended the heroic stand of the Iraqi people and their wise leadership, which is an asset to all Arabs. He said the Iraqi leadership is the epitome of Arab strength, particularly since it has inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Arabs' enemies, be they Americans, Zionists, agents, or traitors. He indicated that marshalling all currents of popular forces and stepping up their militant activities can thwart all colonialist schemes that aim to undermine the Arab nation's status.

Column Condemns 'Why Should I Care' Attitudes

JN2712203694 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 15 Dec 94 p 8

["AL-THAWRAH'S Diary" column by Dr. 'Abd-al-Manaf al-Naddawi: "A Rejected Expression"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A common expression is frequently used these days to justify a certain attitude and avoid taking action. The gravity of this expression is that it clearly denotes selfishness, irresponsibility, and indifference to erroneous and abominable acts which are harmful to the country, the public interest, and fellow citizens. We have noticed, understood, and felt this behavior in our daily life through some people's attitudes. The expression "why should I care" is often used by these people toward any negative act or stand. They also use it nonchalantly whenever they are questioned about their silence over a certain harmful stand or wrong act, as if the matter does not concern them.

Let us make it clear that this is the expression of the weak and it is rejected from both the religious and national aspects, because it completely conflicts with the prophet's tradition which says: "Whoever observes a wrong act should try to change with his hand. If he cannot, then with his tongue; and if he cannot, then with his sentiments, which is the least he should do." It is the expression of the selfish who have no feelings whatsoever for others and who have lost all sense of public interest and only think about themselves and their narrow-minded interests. It is a non-patriotic expression, because it denotes evasion, retreat, and fear from facing an error and those who are behind it. Its common use deprives the individual of the main requisite of expressing true affiliation to the homeland.

The current phase calls on these people to abandon this expression. The homeland is ours and the present and future of our precious Iraq concerns us all. It is not the homeland of only part of the people, but the homeland of all the people. They are all responsible for its security, steadfastness and confrontation, patience, struggle, and construction. Let us then do away with the despairing expression of "why should I care" and uphold the expressions of collective responsibility, joint action, cooperation, harmony, equality, and solidarity.

Settlement Between Efrat, al-Khidr Addressed

Rabin, Peres Agree To 'Reexamine' Issue

TA2712193394 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 27 Dec 94

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The prime minister and the foreign minister agreed this evening to reexamine the issue of the settlement between Efrat and the village of al-Khidr and to take steps that would calm tensions there. Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres expressed his concern, and the prime minister agreed, that the affair of this settlement is particularly problematic because it takes place while negotiations are being held on the next stage of the agreement with the Palestinians.

Some 40 Palestinians were arrested today in the wake of clashes between the security forces and local villagers.

Rabin Orders Legality Checked

TA2812095894 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 28 Dec 94 pp 1, 2

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Text] After twenty-four hours of violent clashes on the disputed hill near Efrat, PLO Chief Yasir 'Arafat approached Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres yesterday and demanded that the construction of the new 'Etzyon Bloc neighborhood be discontinued. 'Arafat warned that continued construction will strengthen the radicals and sabotage the peace process.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0900 GMT on 28 December adds that "PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat and Palestinian Authority member Nabil Sha'th telephoned Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres last night to discuss the work being done at the disputed site north of Efrat and expressed their concern about the situation."]

Last night, it was learned that Rabin has ordered an inquiry into the legality of the settlement construction at Efrat. The issue was also discussed at a Rabin-Peres meeting in the wake of growing concern among Jerusalem officials that the construction is liable to cause a conflagration that will hurt future negotiations with the Palestinians.

It has been learned from the Foreign Ministry that Peres advised 'Arafat that the government policy against expanding settlements has not changed in any respect.

Several ministers will raise the issue at the next cabinet meeting, after the political echelons received assessments that the construction "is detrimental to state security."

Meanwhile, defense establishment elements are recommending the establishment of "Jewish settlement blocs" in the West Bank even during the interim arrangement in order to bolster security in the settlements. The Foreign Ministry and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] are about to complete discussion of the position that will be presented to the Palestinians. Israel will voice its willingness to create Palestinian "enclaves" in the West Bank, although the official stand on the size and nature of these enclaves has not yet been finalized. The plan will be presented to the Palestinians at the liaison committee meeting on 3 January.

Temporary Halt to Construction Ordered

TA2812114594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] First to the dispute over expanding the settlement of Efrat: Bulldozers at the site continued construction work this morning, but we have just learned that the government has ordered a temporary halt until a legal ruling on the matter is handed down. Residents from the nearby Palestinian village of al-Khidr and a small group of Israeli peace activists held a peaceful protest but did not interfere with the building work. However, the political controversy over the issue continues. Following consultations between ministers this morning, it was decided to wait for a ruling from the attorney general on the issue before making a decision. According to a decision taken by Ari'el Sharon when he was defense minister, private building can take place on state land, although it can be halted on two grounds: for security reasons or for what is described as public order.

The Meretz faction is meeting this afternoon to discuss the expansion of Efrat, following calls by Minister Yosi Sarid for an immediate halt to the building.

David Ze'ev from the Knesset brings us up to date on the political consultations on the issue:

[Ze'ev] Mr. Yitzhaq Rabin asked Attorney General Mikha'el Ben- Ya'ir for legal clarification on the Efrat issue back on Sunday, during the weekly cabinet meeting, according to Rabin media adviser 'Oded Ben-'Ami. Government officials say there is no question that construction at the site is legal, but because it has developed into an issue, as they put it, the government is looking for a way out. The land in question is part of the area approved by a previous Israeli Government for the settlement of Efrat, which now looks more like a city than a settlement. At the very outset in 1992, however, this government made a decision to freeze state building in the territories, but what is going on in the current situation is private building. As such, the prime minister has gone to the attorney general for an explanation of the ramifications.

The Meretz coalition faction in the Knesset has scheduled a meeting for this hour on the issue. Meretz is calling on the government to go beyond the black-and-white legal issue and to face the fact that the controversy could create a crisis in the negotiations with the Palestinians.

IDF Completes Plan To Improve Settlement Security

TA2812120194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 28 Dec 94 pp A1, A2

[Report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[FBIS Translated Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has invested 120 million shekels in buttressing the security of West Bank and Gaza Strip settlements. The project was carried out by the Home Front Command, headed by Major General Shmu'el Arad. The operation, known as Spectrum B, has been completed.

An official IDF paper reveals that most West Bank settlements and local councils have fully utilized their IDF budget allocation. Thus, the IDF investment in the Mate Binyamin local council—the municipal authority of several settlements—came to approximately 17 million shekels, while the investment in Qiryat Arba' was 8 million shekels.

The Spectrum B project was made up of two stages: improving settlement security and evacuating the IDF from population centers. With the completion of the security improvement stage, the General Staff is waiting for orders from the political echelons to pull out of large cities in the territories and redeploy in accordance with the Declaration of Principles tenets.

A senior military source has told HA'ARETZ that the security improvement drive was very extensive and involved large investments. Some 100 million shekels were invested in West Bank settlements and 20 million in the Gaza Strip. The senior military source explained that the security improvement plan accounted for several factors ensuing from the IDF withdrawal from West Bank population centers. The IDF realizes that the withdrawal will sap its intelligence capability in the area. Therefore, the possibility that terrorists will step up their activity in the evacuated areas was taken into consideration.

That was the background for the Home Command's decision to improve security in every settlement. To establish investment criteria, the Home Front Command took into consideration several security factors and risk factors as dictated by each settlement's location. In the first stage, each settlement was granted several security items, including: a fence to prevent terrorist infiltrations; an electric gate; a safety road; a weapons store; guard booths; security vehicles; beepers; a public address system; a state-of-the-art communications system.

Soon the defense establishment will begin installing distress buttons in all vehicles owned by settlers at a total cost of 10 million shekels. In addition, security at schools in West Bank settlements will be enhanced.

The Spectrum B operation was based on factors such as the location of settlements and their grouping in blocs, such as the Qatif Bloc. The military source said that in the West Bank, "there are 100 settlements similar in nature to the Gaza Strip's Netzarim, although this matter belongs in the political sphere."

Some settlements objected to being fenced in. Fences have not been built at such sites for the time being. The military source noted that the security improvements and the large investment in their defense "do not mean the settlers will be totally safe and that not a single terrorist will infiltrate from now on, although the settlements' security has been significantly upgraded."

The objection to fences was motivated by ideology. In some instances, settlement leaders were asked to sign release papers, although most were convinced of the need to build fences.

Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister, has recently held a debate on the construction of bypass roads in anticipation of the IDF withdrawal from West Bank population centers. Rabin rejected a Central Command plan for bypass roads presented to him several weeks ago. The plan envisaged an investment of 1 billion shekels. Instead, Rabin partially approved an alternative plan proposed by Noah Kinarti, Rabin's adviser on settlement affairs, involving an investment of 300 million shekels. Only four bypass roads will apparently be built in the initial stage.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0500 GMT on 28 December adds that "the Home Front Command intends to bolster defenses in 100 communities inside Israel, close to the Green Line, in anticipation of the implementation of West Bank autonomy. The plan, which still needs final approval, will cost hundreds of millions of shekels."]

Report on Jordanian Dissatisfaction 'Inaccurate'

TA2812121694 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 28 Dec 94 p 2

[Report by Dan Izenberg, Haim Shapiro, and Jose Rosenfeld]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Report of Jordanian government disaffection with the consequences of the peace treaty with Israel are "inaccurate," Foreign Ministry deputy director-general Eytan Bentzur said yesterday.

Several newspapers reported yesterday that during a meeting between Bentzur and Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, al-Majali had said Jordan was "extremely disappointed" with the Israeli attitude towards implementation of the agreements between the two countries.

Bentzur told THE JERUSALEM POST that al-Majali had been quoting criticism of the peace process leveled by opposition members of the Jordanian parliament.

"On the contrary," he continued, "we had the impression that King Husayn and the government are coping very well with the criticism. They expressed the hope that various processes would be speeded up but in absolutely no way did they express any complaints."

Bentzur said the meeting had been held to discuss Israel's role in projects of international cooperation.

Bentzur said Israel had offered Jordan to provide expertise in the areas of agriculture and housing. [passage omitted]

Minister Criticizes Policy on Jordanian Goods

TA2712094994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Industry and Trade Minister Mikha Harish has criticized the Foreign Ministry in the matter of trade with Jordan. Speaking at a news conference in Tel Aviv, Harish said he hoped the Foreign Ministry was not trying to convey a tacit message to Jordan that Jordanian goods would be allowed into Israel even as the Jordanian boycott on Israeli goods continued.

Our correspondent Arye Shor notes that the Israeli negotiating stand on bilateral trade was that Israel would grant Jordan certain preference in view of the modest size of its economy.

Plan for Desalination Project With Jordan Detailed

TA2812122094 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 28 Dec 94 p 3

[Report by David Rudge]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A desalination plant to meet Elat's growing need for drinking water is among the major new projects Meqorot, the national water company, intends to carry out in 1995.

Meqorot spokesman Ya'el Shoham said the plant in Elat, where a pilot scheme is already in operation, would be followed by a much bigger desalination project—to supply fresh water from the gulf to both Elat and Jordan's al-'Aqabah, in association with a Japanese company.

Details were outlined at a press conference in Tel Aviv yesterday by Meqorot chairman Sar-Shalom Shiran and acting director-general 'Ovadya Ela.

They announced Meqorot's 1995 budget would top NIS [new Israeli shekels] 1.6 billion, of which NIS 600 million are destined for development projects. Shiran noted the development budget is double this year's, saying this had been made possible by reforms enabling Meqorot to raise money on the capital market.

Other development projects include building a plant on the northern shore of Lake Kineret to desalinate water from three briny springs. This water is to be used to boost Jordan's water resources under the peace treaty. Some of the budget is to be used to renovate pumping equipment at the Sapir site of the National Water Carrier, in conjunction with an American firm, as well as to supply more recycled water for agriculture and to improve some urban water networks.

Officials View Water Section of Treaty With Jordan

TA2712144094 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 27 Dec 94 p 7

[Report by Ran Halevi]

[FBIS Translated Text] "As far as we are concerned, Israel's commitment to supply Jordan with 30 million cubic meters per anum, as stipulated in the water clause of the peace treaty, depends on us pumping 20 million cubic meters of al-Yarmuk River flood waters during the winter. The addendum does not cover the distribution of water between the two countries in a drought year, when water resources are scarce."

This statement was made yesterday by Water Commissioner Gid'on Tzur who was touring the Jordan and al-Yarmuk River beds in the Bet She'an Valley and the Jordan Rift Valley along with Agriculture Minister Ya'aqov Tzur, and Water Commission and Meqorot Water Company officials. The officials visited the area to get first hand knowledge of the consequence the peace treaty would have on Israel's water economy.

These remarks give rise to fears of a sharp confrontation with Jordan on this issue in the event of low precipitation in the Lake Tiberias and al-Yarmuk reservoirs during a dry winter.

Gid'on Tzur nevertheless pointed out that the implementation of the agreement was a developing process based on a continuing dialogue between the two countries.

"The Jordanians," he added, "are showing great readiness to cooperate; they have top-notch experts who know how to precisely define their country's water needs and our accumulated experience in holding joint contacts offers a firm basis for the hope that we will be able to overcome all future difficulties and disagreements."

The water commissioner's interpretation of the agreement indicates there will be no drop in the consumption of Lake Tiberias and al-Yarmuk water on Israel's part because any failure to find an alternative water source for the 30 million cubic meters of al- Yarmuk waters supplied to Jordan during summer means drying up the reservoirs used by the Bet She'an Valley settlements to irrigate their agricultural fields along the Jordan river and on the land above the riverbank.

The agreement expressly stipulates retaining existing Israeli uses of al-Yarmuk waters. The Israeli solution to this problem is, as above mentioned, greater utilization of the hitherto unexploited al-Yarmuk winter flood waters, catching them in reservoirs, or even channeling them into Lake Tiberias so they can be used in the summer. "As far as Israel is concerned, this does not really constitute giving up any water we formerly had, although in long- term hydrological terms this agreement may necessitate a more intensive utilization of the Lake Tiberias basin, on the basis of long-range reservoirs left for the water economy," Tzur said.

Commenting on the matter, Agriculture Minister Ya'aqov Tzur said that all the ways experts proposed to organize the production and consumption of regional water resources cannot alter the basic fact that both countries suffer from a shortage of these resources and are objectively have a ability limited to add to the existing consumption level while taking each other's needs into consideration.

The agriculture minister went on to add: "The Jordanians not only have a water shortage but also suffer from problems in managing their water economy." Minister Tzur estimated that at the existing levels of water consumption for agriculture and household uses in both countries, present water reservoirs could suffice if Jordan takes action to reduce water losses in their system and recycle sewage water for agriculture, as is done in Israel.

"Our water economy constitutes a national system which today exploits almost every drop. We cannot greatly increase our consumption from existing sources," the minister said. Data supplied by Minister Tzur showed that nearly one third of household and industrial water usage (approximately 700 million cubic meters annually) is recycled for agriculture and constitutes a sixth of the quantity used in agriculture (which amounts to 1.2 billion cubic meters a year).

"It is internationally accepted that up to 60 percent of household and industrial waste water can be recycled for agricultural use," Tzur said. "That means that the amount of water recycled annually could perhaps be doubled to 400 million cubic meters, but not much more than that." The minister added that within 15 years, Israel will have no alternative to water desalination on a large scale.

Baraq 'Farewell Appearance' at Knesset Committee

TA2812123594 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 28 Dec 94 p 2

[Report by Dan Izenberg]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Outgoing Chief of General Staff Lt.- Gen. Ehud Baraq said yesterday that the peace process was making it more difficult for the army to catch Palestinian fugitives in Judaea and Samaria.

Baraq made the remarks during a farewell appearance before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, five days before winding up a military career spanning more than 35 years, including almost four years as chief of staff.

He said the pursuit of fugitives was "more complicated, because the local inhabitants read the writing on the wall regarding the direction of the (peace) process and the weakening of the (civil) administration as a result of the transfer of powers."

The fact that fugitives can escape to Gaza and Jericho makes the work of the General Security Service more difficult, he added. "Despite that, and even though we are operating under more difficult circumstances, I am certain those still on the wanted list will be eliminated from it. The important question is what they will manage to perpetrate until then."

The chief of staff summed up the main points of his tenure, giving special emphasis to the need to continue supporting the army and providing it with appropriate funding.

"We would not be sitting at the negotiating table without a strong army," said Baraq. "The Arabs would likely outmaneuver us at the table if they thought we were weak. We live in a region where there is no respect for anyone considered weak."

Regarding Lebanon, Baraq said that according to army intelligence estimates, "were the Lebanese government to decide, and receive Syrian political support, it could dismantle the Hizbullah."

He added that during his term, Hizbullah policy has been to fire at Jewish settlements along the northern border only when the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has shelled Lebanese villages or when IDF tanks killed civilians. Baraq added that the army had never struck at Lebanese civilians "for no reason or in order to make an impact on the Hizbullah."

He rejected the demands by army officers for more aggressive action in southern Lebanon. "It is good that field officers demand that we take more massive action, and it is very good that we have a chief of staff, a defense minister and a prime minister who make decisions on the basis of the complete picture," he said.

Baraq said the army had effected an "important revolution" in the past few years regarding military accidents. Twenty-five soldiers have died in all types of accidents so far this year, compared with 89 in 1979, 65 in 1984 and 35 in 1989. However, there has been an increase of eight fatalities compared with last year.

He added that the army's manpower policy had concentrated on regaining the best of the regular soldiers for the professional army.

During a farewell dinner sponsored by the committee after the meeting, most of the MKs [Knesset members] praised Baraq. However, Moshe Nisim and Eliyahu Ben-Elisar (Likud) criticized the chief of staff for not blocking the appointment of IDF officers to the negotiating teams with the Palestinians.

Baraq said he had only given his approval to some of the appointments.

"It's not that the general staff or the army is political," he added. "It is the issues that are political."

Shahal Turns Down Information Portfolio

TA2712093794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Minister Moshe Shahal has waived the information portfolio. Earlier today, Minister Shahal handed the prime minister a letter stating, among other things, that in the wake of public petitions, he reached the conclusion that the post is liable to tarnish the government's image and harm its performance. Mr. Shahal thanked the prime minister for his trust and for incorporating him in the team for political negotiations.

Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Minister Shahal's spokesman, Rafi Levi, has confirmed that Shahal met with the prime minister and turned down the appointment this morning.

Our correspondent Shmu'el Tal reports that coalition chairman Eli Dayan told the prime minister this morning that because of the Meretz opposition, he did not believe a majority of the coalition would endorse the information portfolio appointment.

Knesset Member [MK] Hagay Merom was among the first to congratulate Minister Shahal on his decision. Yesterday Merom, together with other Labor MK's who head Knesset committees, sent Shahal a letter urging him not to accept the information ministry.

Rabin Briefs King on Historic Visit to Oman

JN2812081694 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 28 Dec 94 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman (J.T.)—His Majesty King Husayn left for Austria on Tuesday [27 December] on a several day visit during which he will undergo check-ups for an infection in his middle ear.

The Austria news agency APA reported King Husayn was due for an operation to correct an ear problem.

APA, quoting sources in the office of the governor of Styrian province, Josef Krainer, said King Husayn would be treated at the ear clinic of Graz Hospital.

Rabin Briefs King

Before his departure, the King was contacted by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, who briefed him on a groundbreaking trip the Israeli leader made to Oman.

"It (the phone call) lasted 15 minutes," Mr. Rabin's adviser Benny Cohen said in occupied Jerusalem. "He (Rabin) brought him (the King) up to date on his trip to Oman."

Mr. Rabin flew secretly to Oman on Monday and returned on Tuesday. It was the first visit by an Israeli leader to a Gulf Arab state and Mr. Rabin said he hoped it would strengthen Middle East peace moves.

King Husayn warned Jordanians on Monday not to expect swift economic gains from the treaty with Israel, which ended 46 years of hostilities.

Many Jordanians say they are disappointed to see no immediate cash flow into the economy: Some Jordanian deputies accuse the government of wrongly promising instant prosperity and higher standards of living.

Earlier on Tuesday, Israel's HA'ARETZ newspaper quoted Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali as urging Israel to accelerate implementation of economic aspects of their peace accords.

Dr. al-Majali, who met an Israeli Foreign Ministry team in Amman on Sunday, was quoted by HA'ARETZ as saying the Jordanian people had yet to see dividends from the peace treaty.

Eytan Bentsur, senior deputy director general of Israel's Foreign Ministry, said in Amman that the team offered Israeli know-how in health, education and agriculture.

Mr. Bentsur said: "We are doing our utmost to develop relations because this peace is very dear to us."

King Husayn was seen off upon his departure for Austria by His Royal Highness Prince Muhammad, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, Their Royal Highnesses Prince 'Abdallah Bin al-Husayn and Prince Rashid Bin al-Hasan. Also seeing off the King were Prime Minister al-Majali, the speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, Royal Court Chief al-Sharif Zayid Bin Shakir, senior Royal Court officials, and Cabinet ministers.

The Crown Prince was sworn to serve as Regent prior to the King's departure.

The King is accompanied by Their Royal Highnesses Prince 'Ali Bin al-Husayn and Prince Hamzah Bin al-Husayn.

Husayn Meets Media Before Departure for Austria

JN2612185194 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn has said we are at the threshold of a new stage of different facts that requires us all to rise to the level of responsibility and the numerous challenges facing us—challenges that require an ability to confront the building of a future Jordan. This, his majesty said, will not take place unless we rearrange our situation and mobilize our energy to deal with our issues efficiently, in a way that matches the level and nature of the expected challenges. His majesty stressed that the peace process is being applied as it was agreed, although it is difficult to change things overnight to enable citizens to feel the benefits.

During a meeting with a number of Jordanian journalists, writers, and media figures, his majesty voiced his hope that the situation will improve after a reasonable period and that citizens will feel the positive aspects of the peace stage and will have work if they wish.

In his statements, his majesty dealt with the nature of the current and future stages, democracy, shura, political pluralism, and the need to entrench their roots so they can become a distinguished example, hoping that the majority will benefit from them in coming days that will witness better changes. It is important for Jordan, his majesty said, to occupy a distinguished position by our efforts, our way of life, and our responsibilities, stressing that this will not take place unless we regain the initiative, cooperate with our brothers, and move toward them with open hearts and minds—on the pan-Arab and the Islamic nation level—so together we can rise to a level qualifying us to address the world and convince it of our ability to confront and solve our problems. His majesty then stressed that we should not allow anybody to harm our sacred national unity. His majesty also said that Jordan will not allow anybody to interfere in its independent options and decisions, will not give up its principled positions, and will not interfere in others' affairs.

His Majesty King Husayn also said: Our relations with the Palestinian brothers are distinguished. We will not refrain from offering anything that can serve their cause. He pointed out that Jordan will not give up its role in protecting and serving the holy shrines in Jerusalem until the Palestinian Authority assumes its role. He said if Jerusalem had not been mentioned in the Washington Declaration and the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, there would have been a vacuum and others would have benefited from it.

His majesty added: We will move on the international level soon. We say our position in the world is distinguished and is an object of respect and appreciation. His majesty also tackled the freedom, the responsibilities, and the role of press in dealing with the causes of the homeland and the citizens optimistically and apart from pessimism, excitement, and hurting the feelings of the citizens.

His majesty pointed out that he would leave for Austria tomorrow for medical checks on his middle ear.

A dialogue then was held between his majesty and the audience on various topics and issues of interest to our homeland and our nation.

The meeting was attended by Royal Hashemite Court Chief al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, his majesty's advisers, the crown prince's special adviser, the information minister, and the doyen of the journalists.

Arrives in Austria for Medical Treatment

NC2712200394 Paris AFP in English 1843 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Graz, Austria, Dec 27 (AFP)—King Husayn of Jordan arrived in the southern Austrian town of Graz Tuesday [27 December] for medical treatment, hospital sources said.

The Jordanian head of state, accompanied by two of his sons, was to receive treatment at a local ear-nose-and-throat clinic.

He was greeted at the airport by the governor of Styria Province, of which Graz is the capital. No details concerning the medical treatment or the length of the king's stay were given.

Transportation Meetings With Israelis Held

JN2712202794 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian-Israeli Joint Transportation Committee held a meeting in Tiberias today. The meeting was cochaired by Dr. Hani al-Mulqi, head of the committee for following up the implementation of the peace treaty signed between Jordan and Israel, for the Jordanian side, and by Dr. Elyaqim Rubinstein for the Israeli side.

The committee agreed in principle to reach a transportation accord by the end of January in accordance with the peace treaty and to implement the provisions of the accord in later months.

The Joint Borders Committee also met in Tiberias to demarcate the international borders between the two countries and to take measures to erect border posts.

In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, Dr. al-Mulqi said that the specialized committees are working hard to implement the agreements stipulated in the peace treaty. Within this framework, the water, energy, health, telecommunications, and economic affairs committees are due to hold meetings in Dayr 'Alla and Tiberias tomorrow. The follow-up committee will hold a meeting in the first week of next month. The Transportation Committee was chaired by Dr. Durayd Mahasinah, director general of the Ports Authority. It also included representatives of the Ministry of Transportation, Royal Jordanian, and the Civil Aviation Authority.

Reaction to Israeli Minister's Remarks on Trade

JN2812091794 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Dec 94 pp 1, 26

[Report by Ayman 'Abd-al-Hafiz]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—Commenting on statements made by the Israeli industry and trade minister yesterday on his ministry's refusal to market Jordanian goods in the West Bank and Israel because of the continuation of the Jordanian boycott on Israeli goods, a responsible source at the Information Ministry said that the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel stipulates that the Jordanian boycott on Israeli goods shall be lifted six months after the exchange of documents between the two countries.

The Industry and Trade Ministry sources said that this issue is being raised on the eve of the meeting of the Jordanian-Israeli Economic Affairs Committee scheduled to be held today, and that this is an attempt to force Jordan to lift the boycott once and for all.

It is worth mentioning that a number of Jordanian exporters have previously exported quantities of tomatoes to Israel at the request of Israeli importers to confront the severe shortage of this product in the Israeli markets. However, there have been no reports about other trade deals between the two sides.

Officials Dissatisfied With Peace 'Dividends'

TA2712111394 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Dec 94 p A1

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali said that the Jordanian people have not seen any "dividends from the peace" with Israel. He asserted that although Jordan was encountering problems with "Arab brothers" as a result of the peace treaty it also still had problems to resolve with

Israel. The Jordanian prime minister urged Israel to expedite the implementation of the agreement's economic aspects.

Al-Majali, who met on 25 December with Eytan Bentzur, the deputy director general of the Foreign Ministry, complained that Israeli tourism to Jordan was not helping the latter's economy. "The Israeli tourists come for one day with food from home and do not spend any foreign currency in Jordan," the prime minister said. At the meeting, al-Majali expressed anger over the behavior of a group of Israeli tourists who visited Jabal al-Naba—the peak from where Moses glimpsed the promised land—and prayed at the site.

Political sources in Jerusalem said yesterday that al-Majali's remarks were but the most recent in a series of worrisome signals coming from Jordan in recent weeks.

—A delegation of Jordanian physicians, which was scheduled to arrive in Israel as part of a medical information exchange program, canceled its visit. Sources in Israel expressed the assessment that the cancellation stemmed from political pressure exerted by opposition elements in Jordan.

—The Jordanians have sought to maintain a low profile around a visit by an Israeli commercial delegation, headed by Dani Gillerman, the president of the Union of Chambers of Commerce, which is scheduled to leave for Jordan at the beginning of January.

—The Jordanian Bar Association declared its refusal to cooperate with Israeli attorneys and announced that any Bar member who violated this instruction would face a disciplinary hearing.

—Jordanian newspapers have expressed disappointment over the fact that foreign investments and foreign aid have not flowed into Jordan as expected after the signing of the peace treaty with Israel. The Jordanians have also expressed a negative view regarding the possible appointment of Efrayim Halevi, the deputy head of the Mosad, as the first Israeli ambassador to Amman.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin wants to give Halevi the post but has still not reached agreement on the matter with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres who wants to appoint a Foreign Ministry diplomat. The Foreign Ministry's Supreme Appointments Committee, which meets today, will not discuss the appointment of an ambassador to Jordan until Rabin and Peres reach agreement.

A report sent to Jerusalem yesterday by Ya'aqov Rosen, temporary charge d'affaires at the embassy in Amman, stated that a senior Jordanian security official had voiced strong reservations regarding the appointment of Halevi. In a meeting with Israeli representatives, the Jordanian said: "It would be a serious mistake to appoint a man identified with the Mosad to this post. The appointment would supply ammunition to the local opposition and harm peace. You do not understand the significance of the word Mosad for us."

Earlier, at the multilateral talks on refugees, the Jordanian representatives told their Israeli counterparts that they view the proposal to appoint Halevi as "a joke." Elyaqim Rubinstein, the chairman of the peace treaty's follow-up committee, said yesterday in reaction that he did not believe there was room for concern over the development in relations with Jordan. Rubinstein asserted that "the picture was basically positive" and said there had been no change in Jordanian policy.

Rubinstein said that the Jordanians may have had expectations in certain areas and admitted that they may be facing pressure. "The climax of the signing ceremony may have been followed by grayer days," Rubinstein said. Nevertheless, Rubinstein asserted that the reports from Jordan were mostly positive and so were his meetings with Jordanian officials. The Jordanian media generally featured balanced reports about Israel and the peace process. [passage omitted]

'Reservations' Cited Over Mosad Official Appointment

JN2812092294 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 28 Dec 94 p 23

[Report by Sa'id 'Ayyash for QUDS PRESS: "Jordan Voices Reservations About Appointing Deputy Chief of Israeli Mosad Ambassador in Amman"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Occupied Jerusalem—According to Israeli sources, Jordanian officials have expressed reservations over the possibility of appointing Avraham Halevi, deputy chief of the Israeli Mosad, as the new Israeli ambassador in Amman.

The sources said the Jordanian reservations are part of a series of signals from Jordan, picked up by Israel over the past weeks, that call for concern.

U.S. Asked To Extradite Moslem Militant

NC2412120094 Paris AFP in English 1117 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 24 (AFP)—Jordan has asked the United States to extradite a Saudi militant who was sentenced to death in his absence in Amman for attacks which left nine wounded, AL-SHARQ AL-ASWAT newspaper reported on Saturday [24 December].

Muhammad Jamal Khalifah was one of 11 fundamentalists condemned to death by Amman's state security court last Wednesday for a string of bomb attacks against cinemas in Jordan in 1993, the London-based daily said.

Quoting a Jordanian security source, the paper said contacts were underway between Amman and Washington to "study the possibility of extraditing Khalifah even though the two countries are not linked by an extradition treaty."

A Jordanian legal delegation travelled to Washington two weeks ago for talks on signing such a convention, the source said.

The Saudi fundamentalist, an Omani and a Jordanian of Palestinian origin were sentenced in their absence by the Amman court.

The eight others who received the death penalty were Jordanian nationals. All 11 had fought alongside the mujahedeen or Islamic fighters against Soviet occupation in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

They were found guilty of terrorist conspiracy, possessing explosives and belonging to an illegal organisation. They belonged to a group of 25, all Afghanistan war veterans.

Ministry, U.S. Officials Meet on Extradition Treaty

Official Comments on Treaty Details

JN2812085994 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 28 Dec 94 p 3

[Article by a JORDAN TIMES correspondent]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordanian and U.S. officials have drawn up a draft memorandum of understanding on extradition of criminals between the two countries, Information Minister Jawad al-'Anani said Tuesday [27 December].

Dr. al-'Anani said the document, prepared after discussions between a senior Jordanian Justice Ministry delegation and State Department officials in Washington, had to be ratified by the two governments before its endorsement as a formal extradition treaty.

Asked what were the details of the draft accord, Dr. al-'Anani would only say that "there are different standard forms of extradition treaties" and that particulars of the Jordanian-U.S. document would be studied by the government.

The Arabic-language daily, AL-ASWAQ, quoted Judge Adib Jalamidah, who headed the justice ministry team to the talks in Washington last week, as saying that the draft accord listed all crimes for which extradition would be applicable.

However, it excludes political crimes and violent crimes committed against the heads of state of the two countries or any of their family members, Mr. Jalamidah was quoted as saying.

Confirming that the two countries were involved in discussions on an extradition treaty, Justice Minister Hisham al-Tall said early this month that he expected the document to be finalised and ratified by the two governments in January.

Mr. Jalamidah, who was accompanied by Judge Mashhur Kuk to the Washington talks, also told AL-ASWAQ that the proposed extradition treaty would not have a time limit and would take retroactive effect.

However, it would not be applicable to Jordanian Muhammad Abiquah, who is in detention in Jordan charged with killing his wife in the U.S. and fleeing with his children to the Kingdom to escape U.S. police, Mr. Jalamidah said. He explained that no suspect or accused in Jordan under investigation by a Jordanian court would be covered by the proposed extradition agreement.

The U.S. Government has sought the extradition of Mr. Abiquah, whom U.S. law enforcement authorities have accused of strangling his wife in a dispute over their two children in July. Mr. Abiquah, who was arrested by Jordanian security forces on July 20 and has reportedly confessed to the murder, is expected to be tried by a Jordanian court. No date has been set.

U.S. law enforcement officials have visited Jordan several times to follow up on the case. The U.S. ambassador here, Wesley Egan, has said that he would continue to press the Jordanian Government to extradite Mr. Abiquah.

In fact, it was the Abiquah case that prompted Jordanian-American talks on an extradition treaty between the two countries after U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, nudged by intervention by American congressmen, brought up the case during discussions with His Majesty King Husayn in July.

The two Abiquah children, a girl of six and a boy of three, were returned to the U.S. with their maternal aunt in August.

Meanwhile, officials here could not confirm or deny a report that the Jordanian Government had asked Washington to extradite Muhammad Khalifah, a Saudi Arabian national believed to be living in the U.S. and sentenced to death in absentia by the Jordanian State Security Court in a subversion trial that ended last week.

Mr. Khalifah, a close relative to Saudi-Yemeni millionaire Usamah Bin-Ladin who is accused of bank rolling extremist groups in the Arab World, was sentenced to death along with 10 other in the trial. A Jordanian and an Omani were also sentenced in absentia to death by the court.

Junior-level officials here said they were not aware of any Jordanian request for Mr. Khalifah's extradition from the U.S. At the same time, they said it was also possible that the Jordanian Government could have done so.

Draft Agreement Reached

JN2712112994 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 27 Dec 94 p 3

[Report by Nasir 'Arif]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian and U.S. sides have reached initial agreement on a memorandum of consultation on an extradition treaty. This agreement was concluded after extensive meetings held between representatives from the Jordanian Ministry of Justice and a number of U.S. State Department officials in Washington throughout last week.

According to the draft treaty, whose date of endorsement has not yet been fixed by the Jordanian and U.S. Governments, each of the two sides pledges to extradite criminals who have committed crimes such as those listed in the treaty. The articles of the treaty do not include the extradition of political criminals and those who commit crimes of violence and murder against the heads of the signatory states or their family members.

Adib Jalamidah, attorney general and head of the Jordanian side to these meetings, said that the implementation of the treaty after its endorsement will be retroactive. The articles of the treaty will apply to all crimes committed before and after the effective date of the treaty.

Responding to a question by AL-ASWAQ on whether this means that the Jordanian Government agrees to hand over Jordanian citizen Isma'il Abyuqah to U.S. judicial authorities, Jalamidah said that Abyuqah will not be handed over to U.S. judicial authorities. This is because the case was investigated by the Jordanian courts, which means that it is initially not included in the articles of the treaty of extradition between Jordan and the United States. He added: During the meetings in Washington, we did not discuss individual cases. Rather, the focus was on discussing a draft treaty for the extradition of criminals between the two countries.

The U.S. authorities accused Jordanian citizen Abyuqah of murdering his wife, a U.S. national, and of fleeing to Jordan last August.

Security Committee for Washington Talks Formed

NC2812120794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi met with Interior Minister Michel al-Murr and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz today. The talks dealt with the developments in the situation.

Meanwhile, President al-Hirawi chaired a meeting at the B'abda Palace at 1000 today. The meeting was attended by members of the Security Committee who will hold talks with the U.S. Administration. Also present were Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz; Lebanese ambassador in Washington Riyad Tabbarah; Major General Rafiq al-Hasan, director of internal security forces; Major General Nabih Farhat, director of the state's security; and Raymond Raphael, director of public security forces.

The committee is chaired by Ambassador Riyad Tabbarah and includes: Brigadier General Ibrahim 'Abbas, assistant chief of staff for operations; Brigadier General Kalim Wakim, chief of staff of the internal security forces; Colonel Maha Humsi of the public security forces; and Lieutenant Colonel Hanna Sa'd, in charge of the internal security branch at the state's security.

Tensions, Attacks Continue in Southern Areas

'Resistance' Announces Attacks

NC2412083794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Tensions continue in various southern areas as a result of Israeli attacks. The villages of Habbush, 'Arab Salim, Luwayzah, Mlikh, Jarju', al-Jabal al-Akhdar, Jabal al-Rafi', Sujud, Kafr Rumman, and al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa were subjected to Israeli shelling this morning. Meanwhile, Israeli helicopters flew low-level sorties over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah.

The Islamic Resistance this morning announced that its groups carried out a series of operations after midnight. The resistance issued a statement saying that one of its groups attacked an Israeli tank near the occupation forces' position in Bra'shit, while another group attacked an infantry patrol near the same position. A tank was destroyed, and its crew members were either killed or wounded. Elsewhere, resistance fighters attacked the Haddathah position and destroyed a T-54 tank.

The resistance statement said that the results of the attacks and clashes, which lasted 25 minutes, left six Israelis and agents dead or wounded and two tanks destroyed. The statement noted that the resistance fighters returned safely to base.

Israeli Helicopter Raids Reported

NC2512062794 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Christmas in the south consisted of a firestorm and Israeli assaults against civilians. The Israeli Army used its land and air power in these operations to the tune of escalating threats by Israeli officials.

Israeli helicopters raked with machine-gun fire the al-Sitt Zubaydah Bridge, Nab' al-Tasah, and Jabal al-Rafi' at about 2100 yesterday. They later raided the outskirts of Dayr al-Zahrani, firing two rockets against targets in that area.

The Israelis also bombarded the Lebanese Army's deserted barracks in al-Nabatiyah, the outlying parts of 'Arab Salim, Jarju', al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, Habbush, al-Sitt Zubaydah Bridge, and Jabal al-Rafi' with 155-mm artillery. The citizen Ibrahim 'Ali Dahir was injured during the shelling of Kafr Rumman.

During the night the Israelis dropped flares over the Sidon area.

The Palestinian Black September Battalions Organization issued a statement in 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp, announcing that it had carried out an attack against Israeli positions in al-Tuhrah hill.

The Islamic Resistance claimed an attack against the Bra'shit hill position and said that it had also shelled Taw'amat Niha.

Syrian Defenses Fire at Israeli Planes

NC2712171794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli military aircraft flew over Hizballah positions in Ba'labakk and adjacent villages on the al-Biqa' plain today. Hizballah and Syrian ground defenses fired at the Israeli aircraft, which were flying at high altitude.

Palestinian In-Fighting Reported

NC2812070494 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The areas of al-Jabal al-Rafi', Kafr Tibnit, Kafr Rumman, and 'Arab Salim were subjected to concentrated Israeli 155-mm shell fire during the night from positions inside the occupied border strip.

Meanwhile, the resistance said it has attacked the Lahdist [South Lebanese Army] position in the Jazzin area during the night.

Elsewhere, armed clashes broke out between pro-'Arafat groups and others from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp during the night. One person was killed and another wounded during the clashes. Palestinian official Munir al-Maqdah has accused the Israeli agents within 'Arafat's supporters of implementing Israel's orders to strike at the resistance fighters using new methods.

Israeli Helicopters Continue Attacks

NC2812103594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli helicopters strafed the village of Shaqra at dawn today. A four-year old boy was injured and several houses were damaged. Meanwhile, the occupation forces pounded Bra'shit with 120-mm mortar fire today.

Fadlallah: 'Enemy' Surprised by Reaction to Blast

NC2712151894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah believes that the problem we are going through now has become like an octopus that spreads its tentacles everywhere. In this regard, he called for concentrating efforts on cutting them off. He affirmed that the reaction to the suburb blast was strong and swift. It managed to take the enemy by surprise and kill and injure many among its ranks.

Fadlallah called for rising to the level of mental and moral values and dividing roles in life and coordinating among them.

Woman Arrested in Bombing, Blames Israel

NC2712142494 Paris AFP in English 1251 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, Dec 27 (AFP)—A Lebanese woman in Israel's pay was arrested in connection with a deadly bombing here last week which killed four people, including a key Hizballah security chief, a high-ranking Lebanese official said on Tuesday [27 December].

The official, who declined to be named, told AFP that the investigation into the December 21 bombing in Beirut's Muslim Shiite southern suburbs revealed that an "Israeli network" was behind the attack.

A Lebanese woman was arrested and testified that an Israeli officer headed the alleged network whose aim was to carry out a string of bomb attacks in Lebanon, the official said.

The woman's Lebanese husband, who is also a member of the gang, fled to Israel's self-declared "security zone" in south Lebanon after the bombing.

Two other people who were arrested following the attack have been released after questioning, sources close to the investigation said.

The blast killed four people including Fu'ad Mughanniyah, a security chief in the Iranian-backed Hizballah movement, and wounded 14 others.

The 50-kilogram (110 pounds) bomb was placed in the densely-populated Sfayr neighborhood of the southern suburbs, a stronghold of Hizballah, near a business run by the Moslem fundamentalist group.

Hizballah blamed the bombing on Israel, which had warned it would retaliate for an increase of attacks on its forces in the security zone.

On Monday, Israeli chief of staff General Ehud Barak said the Israeli Army carried out secret operations beyond the zone.

Press Urges 'Balanced' Security Arrangements

JN2512080394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 25 Dec 94

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-THAWRAH says that Israel has not been able to convince anybody of the soundness and credibility of its stand despite its assertions that peace is in the interest of all. The paper asks: But how can peace be at the expense of other parties. Continuing, the paper says: Who believes that the Arabs are ready to present their territory as a gift for Israel to maintain its security and reinforce its hegemony at the expense of Arab dignity? Responding to these questions, the paper says: Has not President Hafiz al-Asad said that Syria prefers the current situation to giving in to Israeli hegemony through unbalanced, partial solutions?

The paper says that it is high time Israel realized that nobody in Syria or in Lebanon is ready to present his territory or an iota of his soil in return for Israel's self-styled peace. The paper stresses that for Syria and Lebanon, peace must be just and comprehensive. The key to such peace is the full restoration of their territory, the withdrawal of settlers and occupation troops, and removing settlements, something which means a return to the pre-5 June 1967 situation.

The paper says: Syria is clear in its efforts and response to the efforts of the U.S. sponsor. Syria is ready to honor the requirements of peace when Israel is ready to honor its obligations, particularly full withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and all occupied Arab territories.

AL-BA'TH discusses the peace process and Israeli officials' statements since the Madrid conference and what has been applied on the ground. The paper says: Israel's policy is based on useless playing with words. The peace initiative, which Syria accepted and negotiated its implementation, stipulates a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan and all occupied territories, which means returning to pre-5 June 1967 lines.

The paper says that Israel has tried and continues to try to evade the written text of the initiative, creating obstacles to the peace process to derail it or undermine it. In both cases, the region and the world will be adversely affected.

Responding to the Rabin government's unreasonable demands for strategic sites on the Golan or what it called observation points as a condition for security arrangements, the paper says that the Rabin government deliberately ignores that the international resolutions demand full withdrawal. The paper stresses that full peace requires full withdrawal, and that Syria refuses to engage in discussions knowing in advance that they harm its rights. The paper adds: If, for the sake of argument, we accept security arrangements, they must be balanced. There is no other way.

Proposals Further Discussed

JN2812073494 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 28 Dec 94

[Report by Thana' al-Imam in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Text] After everything that was published and announced by official sources and press in Damascus, it has become quite clear that in the recent talks held in Washington between the Syrian Ambassador Walid al-Mu'alim and Israeli Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich, with the participation of ranking military officials like Syrian Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Hikmat al-Shihabi and his Israeli counterpart Ehud Barak, the Israeli side has underscored various points related to security arrangements, as Syria has declared a few days ago. These security arrangements include setting up monitoring posts or spying towers, according to Syrian sources, maintaining some occupied Syrian lands, and reducing the size of the army. Damascus considered all these demands futile and impossible. Syria, which said the recent talks in Washington did not lead to specific results, summed up its position in clear points.

First, security arrangements should be equal and parallel for both sides. Second, there is no room for any discussion on Israel's keeping Syrian lands or any part of them, which would be in violation of international legitimacy resolutions, which is a Syrian strategy and not a maneuver. Third, Syria rejects the establishment of monitoring posts or spying towers because this will perpetuate the state of war, and peace in this case will remain fragile and prone to collapse at any moment. Fourth, Damascus rejects any Israeli proposals that prejudice Syria's historic rights and that are considered interference in its internal affairs. Fifth, Syria cares about its security just as Israel does. Syria even believes that its security is far more threatened than Israel's due to the latter's possession of a huge arsenal that includes various weapons of mass destruction.

Attacks on Lebanon Said To Bolster Resolve

JN2412075594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0530 GMT 24 Dec 94

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an editorial today, headlined "Israel's Withdrawal Key to Peace and Security", the daily TISHRIN writes: Israel has tried all manner of intimidation and aggression tactics to harm Lebanon and its national accord effort and the special historical ties between it and Syria. Israel has, to no avail, tried out military, political, and security pressure to uncouple Lebanon from Syria and force it into a separate peace under which it would surrender its sovereignty and independence.

Far from undermining the country's resolve, Israel's latest attacks on south Lebanon's villages and hamlets will serve to strengthen its determination. These acts of aggression will only bolster the resolve of the Lebanese to regain their territory and rights and safeguard their independence and sovereignty.

The Israeli prime minister, who has invoked the security belt argument, might have learned the lessons of the past and enlightened the Israeli public. The so-called security belt has hardly provided security to the occupying Israeli troops. Nor has the army of local agents had any success in its effort to keep the national resistance from fulfilling its sacred duty. Resistance is growing and Israel's losses are correspondingly mounting. Only once it pulls its troops out of south Lebanon and signs up for an equitable and universal settlement leading to true peace in the region will Israel know the taste of tranquility and rest.

Without Syria and Lebanon taking part in it, and short of a complete Israeli pullout from the Golan Heights and south Lebanon, peace in the Middle East is unachievable. It is a universally appreciated fact that peace and occupation are irreconcilable. The world also recognizes that Israel is the party to blame for the explosive conditions in the region and the destruction of the international peacemaking efforts, concludes TISHRIN.

Al-Zu'bi Receives Egyptian Petroleum Minister

JN2712183294 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received at 1400 today Dr. Hamdi al-Banbi, Egyptian petroleum and mineral resources minister. The meeting was attended by Dr. Nadir Nabulsi, minister of oil and mineral resources; the director general of the Syrian Oil Company; and the Egyptian ambassador in Damascus.

Mr. al-Banbi conveyed Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi's greetings to Mahmud al-Zu'bi, who asked him to convey his greetings to the Egyptian prime minister. During the meeting, discussions dealt with the existing relations of cooperation between the two countries in the field of oil and mineral resources.

In a separate development, the Syrian-Egyptian Joint Subcommittee for Oil and Mineral Resources began meetings at the Ministry of Oil and Mineral Resources this morning. The Syrian side was led by Dr. Engineer Nadir Nabulsi, minister of oil and mineral resources, while the Egyptian side was led by Dr. Hamdi al-Banbi, Egyptian minister of oil and mineral resources.

At the beginning of the meeting, Dr. Nabulsi noted the importance of those meetings within the framework of the Syrian-Egyptian Subcommittee for Oil and Mineral Resources. He said conferees will discuss ways of reinforcing and promoting existing cooperation in all economic fields, especially in the fields of oil and mineral resources, in pursuance of the instructions of the political leadership in Syria and Egypt.

The minister stressed the need to translate those meetings into practice through the establishment of Syrian-Egyptian projects and industries, benefiting from Syrian and Egyptian skills. He said those skills should be promoted to match world developments in the oil and gas industries. Dr. Nabulsi stressed the importance of those joint achievements and projects, which reflect the faith of Syria and its leader President Hafiz al-Asad in Arab unity and economic integration.

For his part, Dr. al-Banbi noted that Syria and Egypt possess advanced expertise in the fields of oil and mineral resources, and that each side can benefit from the expertise of the other in other fields, be it in the field of exploration, digging, refining, the establishment of joint projects, as well as cooperation in the field of construction, engineering designs, and laboratories.

Members of the joint subcommittee have been tasked with translating the deliberations held during those meeting into an agreement. They have also been tasked with laying down a practical program covering the projects that are intended to be set up so that they can be presented to the Higher Syrian-Egyptian Joint Committee, expected to hold its next meeting in Cairo next month.

On the Syrian side, the meeting was attended by the director general of the State Enterprise for Geology and Mineral Wealth, the director general of the Syrian Oil Company, and some senior Oil Ministry employees. On the Egyptian side, the meeting was attended by director general of the Egyptian Drilling Company, and some Egyptian Oil Ministry employees.

Afghanistan

'Official Source' Denies Rabbani To Resign

LD2812092794 Tehran IRNA in English 0641 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—An Afghani official source rejected reports on possible quit of Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani and said that the president has not made a decision in this connection.

Speaking in Peshawar Tuesday [27 December], the source told IRNA that negotiations were held by leaders of Afghan jihad groups, governor generals and political and religious figures on the future of the country.

Previous reports indicated that Rabbani was to quit in favour of Afghan Chief Justice Moulvi Shah Fazli.

The extended term in office of Rabbani expires today (Wednesday), however, the reliable sources have said that he would not quit due to the continuation of war in Afghanistan and lack of an authorized source who could undertake the position.

Meanwhile, the Afghan opposition groups held various meetings in Peshawar and Jelalabad in the past few days and discussed Afghanistan's situation, however, reports said that situation was calm in Kabul yesterday.

Two Hekmatyar Bases Captured in Fariab

LD2512175894 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Two important and strategic bases of the Golboddin militia in Fariab Province have been captured by the the Islamic Army forces and mojahedin. Reports received from Fariab Province say that the Golboddin militia's bases in Qadoghak and Shora, where the Dostum militia mounted offensives against the Islamic Army forces and the mojahedin, were cleared of the militia two days ago and were captured by the Islamic Army forces during a successful operation. With the capturing of those bases, 500 houses and many villages were rid of the militia's persecution. Mojahedin and Islamic Army forces cleared 15 other security posts of Dostum's men in the Talibegar area. Details of this report will be given later to the compatriots.

Registration of NGOs Announced

LD2412184994 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ministry of Planning announces that all home and foreign non-governmental organizations, NGOs, which operate in Afghanistan or have requested official registration in the Islamic State of Afghanistan, are informed that on 1 January 1995, all organizations requesting registration under the assigned regulation of the Islamic State of Afghanistan must contact the Non-governmental Organizations Office at the Ministry of Planning for official registration.

Bangladesh

Wajed: MP's Have 'No Choice' But To Resign

BK2812125394 Hong Kong AFP in English 1234 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, Dec 28 (AFP)—Bangladesh's main opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Wajed on Wednesday [28 December] announced that opposition lawmakers would resign en masse after the government failed to accept their political demands.

She also proposed a legal framework for the holding elections under a neutral caretaker government to be headed by the country's president, Abdur Rahman Biswas.

"We tried, but we have no choice but to resign to uphold democracy and people's right," she told supporters of her Awami League, before leading her MPs to the tightly guarded parliament house.

A deadline for the government to hand over to a neutral administration to lead the country into new elections expired at midnight on Tuesday, but both sides of the political divide had reportedly made fresh proposals in a bid to end the nine-month political standoff.

Opposition MPs, who have been boycotting parliament since March to back their demands, had vowed to hand in resignation letters by 7:00 p.m. (1300 GMT) unless an accord were struck with the government.

MPs from other parties opposing the government were slowly converging on the parliament house, ahead of the arrival of Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali to receive the resignation letters.

Problems in Attracting Foreign Investment Viewed

BK2612104094 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 19 Dec 94 p 1

[Article by Aini Elias]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The flow of foreign investment to the country still remained far below the government's expectation despite the liberalisation of the country's economy during the last few years.

This was pointed out by the report of a high-powered task force on investment. Identifying the impediments to the expected flow of foreign investment to the country, the task force report observed that the more liberalised policies of some South Asian countries, China, and Vietnam were now posing a challenge to Bangladesh's prospect of attracting foreign investment.

The report said that the comparative statement of major development indicators of some selected Asian countries revealed that the per capita GNP in Bangladesh (220 U.S. dollars) and the export earnings in 1993-94 (2.5 billion U.S. dollars) were much lower that of others. It observed that the current rate of gross domestic investment at 13 percent of GDP was insufficient to create the needed export-push for the country.

In its report on "Foreign Investment Promotion" to be submitted to the cabinet soon, the task force identified 14 major impediments to the flow of foreign investment to Bangladesh.

It also made some recommendations to improve the investment climate in the country.

The task force mentions in the report that 385 joint ventures or 100 foreign investment projects with total outlay of U.S. dollars 1,415 million have been approved by the Board of Investment (BOI) till September this year. Out of 385 projects, 244 are in operation. The rest are in different stages of implementation.

During the period from March 1991 to September '94, a total of 2,014 industrial units have been registered with the BOI involving U.S. dollars 1,883 million. Of the units, 225 are foreign investment projects with total amount of U.S. dollars 986 million, the task force says.

The task force ticks off a list of impediments: (1) poor image of Bangladesh abroad (2) lack of adequate infrastructural facilities (3) lack of one-stop services for investors (4) lack of implementation of declared policy and coordination between government agencies (5) labor unrest and trade union militancy (6) hartals [strikes] and political agitation (7) comparative disadvantages in incentives, infrastructure and so on with other competing countries (8) customs clearance problems (9) lack of trained human resources (10) lack of investment information or data for policy making (11) corruption (12) rapid import and trade liberalisation and their negative effect on existing local manufacturing industries (13) lack of effective and efficient investment banking system and (14) high interest rate of industrial credit.

On the basis of the identification of major problems and recommendations for solutions, a detailed action plan to be submitted soon to the Government, is being prepared by BOI.

Recommendations of the task force are: launching investment publicity and promotional activities abroad, arranging one-stop service, developing infrastructural facilities, improvement of capital market, reform in investment-related laws, improvement of law and order situation, elimination of harassment to the potential investors, developing efficiency in policy implementation, reducing bureaucratic interference and control, bringing consensus among political parties, interministerial and inter-agency coordination and extension of tax holiday period up to the year 2005.

Besides, the task force also suggests reducing interest rates on industrial credit, boosting efficiency and skills of manpower through training, setting up a data bank for collecting, analysing and disseminating investment information, giving pioneer status to industries with foreign investments which will produce basic raw materials and exportable goods, and allowing EPZ [export processing zone] facilities for all 100 percent export-oriented industries.

The task force also prepared a list of potential investing countries to woo foreign investment that included Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), United Kingdom, Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, U.S.A., and Canada.

In the report, the task force presented a comparative statement showing major incentives and policy guidelines of some selected countries including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand.

The 13-member task force was formed by the government with M. Morshed Khan, special envoy to the prime minister, as the convenor on April 17, 1994 after the visit of the premier to Japan for seeking Japanese investment in Bangladesh.

Other members of the high-powered task force are: principal secretary to the prime minister, secretary of industries, secretary of finance, secretary of commerce, secretary of energy, chairman of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), executive chairman of BOI, secretary to the prime minister, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), president of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Syed Amir Khasru Mahmud—MP, and president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, (MCCI).

The terms and reference of the task force were: (a) formulation of short, medium, and long-term recommendations for promoting Japanese investment (b) recommendations for removal of impediments towards foreign investment (c) preparation of action plan for implementing the recommendations and (d) any other related subjects.

India

'Senior' Congress-I Leader Singh Resigns Post

Party 'Restoration' Cited as Reason

BK2412125894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The senior Congress-I leader and human resources development minister, Mr. Arjun Singh, has tendered his resignation from the Union Cabinet, calling for restoration of the credibility of the party and the government. In his seven-page resignation letter to the prime minister submitted in the afternoon today, he said immediate steps are needed to end what he termed the all-pervasive disillusionment with the Congress-I leadership.

Announcing his resignation at a crowded press conference in New Delhi, Mr. Arjun Singh said he will, however, continue to work for the party as a member of the Working Committee. In his letter to the prime minister, Mr. Singh has suggested six steps to restore the party's credibility. These include an enquiry by a sitting Supreme Court judge to identify the beneficiaries of the securities scandal, action to give a human face to economic reforms and apology to the minorities for the demolition of the Babri Masjid, and restructuring of the party to restore the democratic functioning of all its forums. He said there should also be an enquiry into the disinvestment of PSU [public sector units] shares. Steps should be taken for the empowerment of the scheduled castes and tribes and other weaker sections and strong action taken against antisocials. Mr. Arjun Singh has also called for expediting follow up action on the Verma Commission report which probed Rajiv Gandhi's assassination.

Answering a volley of questions, Mr. Arjun Singh made it clear that his resignation is not a challenge to Mr. Narasimha Rao. He would campaign for the party in the coming assembly elections. Referring to the chain of events since the middle of 1991, when the Congress-I came to power with a mission to make India a strong and modern country, Mr. Arjun Singh said a perception has emerged that liberalization of the economic policy has, perhaps, become a liberalization of corruption.

Cabinet Ministers' Reactions

BK2412161294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpts] The senior Congress-I leader and Human Resource Development Minister, Mr. Arjun Singh, has resigned from the Union Cabinet. The president has accepted the resignation on the advise of the prime minister. [passage omitted]

The Council of Ministers has described the allegations brought against the leadership of the government and party by Mr. Arjun Singh as baseless and mischievous. In a joint statement issued in New Delhi a short while ago, all the Cabinet ministers and ministers of state and deputy ministers said in parliamentary politics electoral reverses are normal, but it is reprehensible that a senior leader who participated in all governmental and organizational decisions should choose to attack the leadership and try to disrupt the party. It said Mr. Singh has not followed the minimum requirement of a descent political and parliamentarian behavior. Stating that the whole party at this hour unitedly stands behind the prime minister and Congress-I president, the ministers have expressed the hope that millions of party workers would face with courage and conviction the opposition onslaught in future.

The Maharashtra Chief Minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, said that he does not expect any crisis in the Congress-I following the resignation of Mr. Arjun Singh. Talking to our correspondent, he said does not foresee any change in the leadership of the party. Mr. Pawar described the resignation of Mr. Arjun Singh as a wrong decision. He also said that it will not have any impact on the party's prospect in the forthcoming assembly elections in Maharashtra.

The Kerala Chief Minister, Mr. K. Karunakaran, has termed Mr. Arjun Singh's resignation as unfortunate. He told newsmen in Calicut that the resignation will not pose any threat to the central government.

The Janata Dal has demanded the resignation of the central government and holding of fresh elections. The party general secretary, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, said in New Delhi that Mr. Arjun Singh's resignation has vindicated the opposition's stand.

The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] spokesman, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjit, said that Mr. Arjun Singh's resignation was expected.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] says that the issues raised in the resignation letter of Mr. Arjun Singh are the same as those which BJP and other opposition parties have been raising for a long time.

Party Leaders Criticize Action

BK2512084094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There has been widespread criticism of Arjun Singh's resignation from the Union Cabinet with central ministers, Congress-I chief ministers, CWC-I [Congress-I Working Committee] members, and Pradesh [State] Congress-I chiefs rallying behind the prime minister.

In a joint statement in New Delhi, the Union Council of Ministers described as baseless and mischievous Mr. Arjun Singh's allegations against the party leadership. They said it is reprehensible that a senior leader who was a party to all governmental and organizational decisions should choose to attack the leadership. They assured Mr. Narasimha Rao that the entire party stands united behind him.

In another joint statement, 13 members of the party's Working Committee described Mr. Arjun Singh's action as one of utter irresponsibility. The signatories to this statement includes Dr. Bal Ram Jakhar, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, Mr. Sita Ram Kesri, Mr. Janardhana Poojary, Mrs. Meira Kumar, Mr. Shushil Kumar Shinde, and Mr. Ahmed Patel.

Describing the resignation as unfortunate, the union home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, said if Mr. Singh wanted an enquiry by a sitting Supreme Court judge into the security scam he could have demanded it when he was in the cabinet. The minister of state for home, Mr. Rajesh Pilot, stressed the need for working unitedly but felt that the issues raised by Mr. Arjun Singh were relevant. The former union minister, Mr. Madhavrao

Scindia, described the resignation as uncalled for. A group of 20 Congress-I MPs expressed full faith in Mr. Narasimha Rao's leadership while two secretaries of the Congress-I Parliamentary Party—Mr. Sudhir Sawant and Mr. Manoranjan Bhakta said Mr. Arjun Singh's action will strengthen the forces of communalism and fundamentalism.

The chief ministers of Congress-I ruled states described the resignation as an attempt to weaken the party. The Maharashtra chief minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, said it is a wrong decision, while the chief ministers of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Kerala said it was an attempt to weaken the party. The Assam council of ministers in a resolution said the resignation will adversely affect the country's struggle against the forces of disunity. The presidents of several Pradesh Congress-I units criticized Mr. Arjun Singh's action and pledged support to the leadership of Mr. Narasimha Rao. They include Mr. Nakul Das from Assam; Mr. Deep Chand Bandhu from Delhi; Mr. Parasam Bhardwaj from Madhya Pradesh; Mr. J.B. Patnaik from Orissa; and Mr. Prabodh Rawal from Gujarat.

The Uttar pradesh Congress-I chief, Mr. N.D. Tiwari, said the issues raised by Mr. Arjun Singh should be addressed immediately. The Youth Congress-I president, Mr. M.S. Bitta, expressed full support to Mr. Narasimha Rao's leadership. The former prime minister and Janata Dal leader, Mr. V.P. Singh, said Mr. Arjun Singh's resignation will set off a chain reaction in the Congress-I party. The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, said the resignation was expected, while the West Bengal chief minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, described it as an internal affair of the Congress-I.

February State Elections Viewed

BK2712144994 Delhi INDIA TODAY in English 31 Dec 94 pp 92-95

[First paragraph is INDIA TODAY introduction]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The thought of voters indulging in copycat behaviour and continuing the anti-Congress(I) wave in the five states which are going to the polls in February next year, is causing exhilaration in the Janata Dal-ruled Orissa and Bihar and palpitations in the Congress(I)-ruled Gujarat and Maharashtra. Bihar Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav fervently hope she can ward off the threat of the Samata Party in the state; Orissa's Biju Patnaik is behaving as though it is a foregone conclusion that he will stay in power: the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] feels it now has an edge over the Congress(I) in Gujarat; and in Maharashtra, Chief Minister Sharad Pawar sees a desperately-wanted chance to emerge as the saviour of the Congress(I) by protecting its last bastion.

Gujarat

The Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh assembly poll results have undoubtedly come as a shot in the arm for the Gujarat BJP which, in the absence of a powerful political issue, was virtually struggling to maintain its grip against the Congress(I). But with the 'debacle of the Congress(I) in the south, it has suddenly acquired an edge on the eve of the state assembly polls.

The BJP had been searching for a powerful issue to attract votes following the loss of the Hindutva [Hinduism] plank. The death of Chief Minister Chimanbhai Patel, in fact, came as a blow to the BJP which had found in him an easy target for levelling charges of corruption, criminalisation of politics and misrule.

The lukewarm public response to the Hindutva lobby's call for a Maha Aarti [worship ceremony] on December 6 in Ahmedabad, just three days before the southern results, was an indication of the waning appeal of Ayodhya. And like the Congress(I), the BJP too seemed to be struggling with internal dissension—both Keshubhai Patel, the leader of the Opposition, and former party chief Shankarsinh Vaghela are likely to vie for the chief ministership in the event of a victory, while Vaghela and party ideologue Narendra Modi don't see eye to eye.

But all that seems to be changing. As the southern results came in a wave of jubilation swept the state BJP headquarters in Ahmedabad. Said Modi, the BJP's key poll strategist in Gujarat: "The writing is on the wall for the Congress(I). We are set to ride to power."

An overwhelming pro-BJP wave may not emerge but the party certainly holds a clear edge over the Congress(I) now. The Congress(I)'s public image is much poorer in Gujarat than in either Andhra Pradesh or Karnataka, thanks to the corruption and criminalisation of politics during its four-year rule. And the party is seen as having 'bought' power by roping in defectors in the form of Chimanbhai Patel and his Janata Dal-Gujarat (JD-G). As Dinesh Shukla, a political analyst, says: "The Congress(I) has serious credibility problems in Gujarat. The scenario is ripe for an antiruling party vote."

The BJP, despite its bankruptcy of leaders, can count on the support of the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad—World Hindu Council] and other Hindu allies. The VHP, ironically, has made gains in Gujarat despite an apparent let-up in the Hindu wave thanks to its band of committed workers. When it was banned after the Babri Masjid demolition, it had just 700 village samitis in Gujarat. Today, it has over 4,000. The circulation of its mouthpiece, VISHWA HINDU SAMACHAR, was below 25,000 copies then. But now, with the lifting of the ban, the print order of its first issue will be over 50,000 copies. Says state VHP General Secretary Dr Pravin Togadia: "There is a strong pro-BJP undercurrent which will now be discernible after the southern results."

Expectedly, the mood in the Congress(I) camp was sombre following the results. The immediate reaction of shaken party bigwigs was to organise a meeting of top leaders to forge unity in the faction-ridden party—there are three groups, one led by Madhavsinh Solanki, the second by the Ahmed Patel-Prabodh Raval combine and the third is the former JD-G. Said state party chief Prabodh Raval: "There is a lesson we have to learn from the results. People want us to be united."

But the bone of contention is the JD-G group which doesn't see eye to eye with the Solanki faction, which has launched a campaign to ensure that the JD-G group gets minimum tickets. It was only the fear of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao—who has been soft towards it—that had prevented the Solanki faction from going all-out against the JD-G group. But now with a politically weak Rao at the helm, it might step up its anti-JD-G group drive.

The emergence of a third political alternative in Gujarat cannot now be ruled out with the anticipated efforts of N.T. Rama Rao [NTR] and V.P. Singh to revive the National Front. Dinesh Shah, a senior Congress(I) leader, who left the party early this year to float the Rashtriya Surajya Party, a small regional outfit committed to cleaning up politics, says: "The people are clearly looking for a third political force now. People like us stand a good chance."

Ironically, the results have meant a sudden increase in the political weight of Madhavsinh Solanki, popular at the grassroots level in the Congress(I) and amongst the backward classes. With those who Mandalised politics coming to power in both Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the Gujarat Congress(I) now just cannot ignore its own Mandal messiah, Solanki.

Maharashtra

In the past two years, adversities like the earthquake and bomb blasts have called for highly developed coping skills from the people of Maharashtra. Now, after being trounced in the two southern states, the Congress(I) hopes that some of that ability to cope will rub off on it too. Less than two months after the depressing results in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the state has its date with the ballot box. While an optimistic opposition, encouraged by the recent results, looks forward to a crucial election, the Congress(I) approaches it with a few misgivings.

While state leaders like Murli Deora, MP, and the PCC(I) [Pradesh Congress Committee-Indira] President Shivajirao Deshmukh believe that the Congress(I) debacle will have "a degree of negative impact" on the party's prospects for election to the 288-member house, they are optimistic that the impact can be contained by an aggressive campaign strategy and clever ticket distribution.

Barely had the disastrous news from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka started pouring in when Pawar parked himself in Delhi. As party president P.V. Narasimha Rao faced the diatribe from detractors like Arjun Singh and N.D. Tiwari, an astute Pawar remained silent. He spoke only to defend a very vulnerable Rao. Said a prominent Pawar dissident: "It was very important for him to side with Rao—to earn the reward of near-total control over the Maharashtra poll strategy." Indeed Pawar badly wants to be the party's saviour. An outstanding election result is the surest ticket to the title.

That Maharashtra has backed the Congress(I) in the midst of an anti-Congress(I) wave is a historical statistic Pawar has drawn comfort from. But an early assessment indicated that the fence-sitting voters will be less inclined to back a losing horse. Pawar is now trying to accommodate this factor into his strategy that could fetch 3540 seats more than the Congress(I) victory of 141 last time: select dynamic but loyal candidates, allow little room to dissident groups, focus on state-level achievements and concentrate on alienated voting groups like Muslims.

While his campaign strategists figure out how they can best sell the party's buzzwords—stability and liberalisation—Pawar is busy extending the olive branch to a hurt and sceptical Muslim community. Rafiq Zakaria, noted scholar and Congress(I) loyalist, remarked that "the resentment against the Congress(I) runs really deep" following the Ayodhya upheaval and more so, after the post- Ayodhya riots in Bombay. Said a party Muslim MLA [member of Legislative Assembly]: "Whether we can woo them back depends on what we offer in our manifesto."

What really helps the party is the TINA (There Is No Alternative) factor—the absence of a secular and strong third force, comprising the left and likeminded parties as in Karnataka or Andhra Pradesh. The BJP-Shiv Sena combine which won 94 seats in the last elections is, by definition, an exclusively Hindutva coalition. Though Prakash Javdekar, BJP secretary said, "we're keen not to rub the Muslim psyche the wrong way," the party is unlikely to win the community vote. But strategies apart, it is really the ground-level campaigning that holds the key this time. While the BJP set its campaign rolling with Gopinath Munde, the opposition leader, embarking on a statewide Sangharsh Yatra, the Sena began last month with a statewide convention in its stronghold Nashik. They are beating the Congress(I), mainly Pawar, with the consolidated stick of corruption, criminal links, and non-concern for the poor. Said Javdekar, "We will not spare a government that is responsible for bomb blasts, sex scandals and tribal murders." But Pawar retorts by stressing his government's achievements: a policy for women, setting up regional development boards for the backward regions and fulfilling the 17-year-long demand of the Dalits to rename the Marathwada University after Dr Ambedkar. It's a do-or-die pitch for the Congress(I) and it's in Pawar's interests to ensure that Maharashtra does not go the way of the two southern states.

Bihar

With the implications of last fortnight's assembly elections beginning to sink in, the people of Bihar have just one question to ask: Will Laloo be the next to go? For those who think he will, it may be thanks to Mtish Kumar's Samata Party—the breakaway faction of the Janata Dal.

"The four states witnessed a hurricane of anti-ruling party votes, a hurricane that is moving menacingly towards Bihar," says Kumar, backed by leaders such as George Fernandes. And with Laloo equally confident—"Let the polls come, and we will prove it"—the battle lines are drawn.

If Laloo is depending on the Muslim-Yadav-Dalit factor and a section of the EBCs [economically backward classes] to see him through, the Samata Party, which is trying to draw up alliances with the CPI(ML)-Liberation [Communist Party of India-Marxist-Leninist] and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (Soren group), is banking on the economically advanced Kurmis and Koeris, besides the Bhumihars and other forward castes. But analysts say forward caste votes will be split three ways—between the Samata Party, the Congress(I) and the BJP, optimistic after its performance in the south. As for the Congress(I), it is doing what it does best—with infighting at a new high, and minus a leader, the party's chances, say observers, are far from bright. But even if it did turn things around for itself and made the fight between the Janata Dal and the Samata Party closer, would it be enough to make a difference to the final results—given the voter's recent preference for change?

Orissa

The Congress(I)'s rout in the south has been like swallowing a fistful of Prozac pills for the ruling Janata Dal in Orissa. The sense of despondency engulfing partymen has suddenly given way to buoyant confidence.

The party is optimistic about its chances in the state elections to be held in February. "No one can stop us from beating the Congress(I) hollow," said Chief Minister Biju Patnaik. The Janata Dal is convinced that the Centre's economic policies, having failed to click in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Sikkim, will not deliver in Orissa too. Besides, the prime minister is not charismatic enough to boost the Congress(I)'s image in the state.

But the Janata Dal's greatest advantage in Orissa could be the Congress(I)'s J.B. Patnaik, the PCC(I) chief. The ten years of his misrule have yet to fade from public memory. The Congress(I) has also to contend with infighting and the effect of the NTR wave in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh which could make a dent in its traditional vote bank in the border districts of Koraput and Ganjam.

The Janata Dal's victory in Karnataka, together with fresh optimism over a unified National Front as a viable alternative at the Centre, will also go in Biju Patnaik's favour. And the more he is involved in national opposition politics, the less he will be the target of attacks at home. If the left parties tie up with him, efforts like the one by former Lok Sabha speaker, Rabi Ray, to float a third front will come to nought. Then, Ray's Samata Party, the SUCI and the Socialist Party won't be a threat.

Sensing victory, Biju has patched up with his detractors within the party such as Srikant Jena and Sarat Kar, and announced pre-election sops. The day the poll schedule was announced, so was an increase in reservations for OBCs [other backward classes] from 12 to 27 per cent, besides schemes for helping small and marginal farmers: an additional cost to the state exchequer of around Rs [rupees] 100 crore. For a ruling party desperate for another term, it seems like a small price to pay.

'Understanding Reached' During Chernomyrdin Visit

Agreements Signed on Military, Space Issues

BK2312163094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Russia today signed eight agreements to give impetus to bilateral relations in various fields. The agreements included long-term program of military and technical cooperation up to the year 2000, merchant shipping, and promotion and mutual protection of investments.

Under another accord, Russia is to provide India specific data on annual purchases for the next three years of soybean, tea, tobacco, and pharmaceuticals from the funds available from repayments. The implementation of this plan will be monitored by the Indo-Russian Joint Commission. Both the countries have also agreed to cooperate in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

The visiting Russian Prime Minister, Mr. Chernomyrdin, at a press conference said that Russia has not supplied weapons to Pakistan, nor is there any plan to do so in future. On the fighting in Chechnya, he denied civilian casualties.

Earlier, Mr. Chernomyrdin met the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao. During the meeting, Mr. Narasimha Rao stated that the interaction between the two countries should be further enhanced. The Russian leader also held bilateral talks with the president. Mr. Chernomyrdin is on a day's visit to the country.

Commentary Hails Outcome of Visit

BK2412101394 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Dec 94

[Commentary by Ashnarain Roy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to India and the agreements signed by the two countries in various fields, including a longterm program of military and technical cooperation, will rejuvenate the longstanding friendship between the two countries.

It is quite apparent that Prime Minister Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao's Russia visit in June this year has indeed acted as a catalyst in reviving the special ties between the two countries. The agreements signed in Delhi are, thus, the first significant byproducts of the broad understanding reached between President Yeltsin and Prime Minister Rao on the development of bilateral ties in the post-Soviet era. Mr. Chernomyrdin's visit highlights not only the significance of bilateral economic and defense ties, but also underlines the speed with which efforts have been made to restore the former close ties between the two countries. Commerce Minister Mr. Pranab Mukherji's visit to Moscow last September and earlier visits by Home Minister Mr. S.B. Chavan and Air Force Chief Air Marshal S.K. Kaul and also the visit of the 16-member parliamentary delegation from Russia reminds one of the old days, when interaction between New Delhi and Moscow was constant.

India-Russian ties are bound to grow because of the commonality of longterm national interests of the two countries. While Russians have their interest in retaining the Indian defense market, India is keen to ensure uninterrupted supply of spares even in difficult contingencies. Despite Russian production and supply bottlenecks during the past three years, which were a source of concern for India, the defense relationship between Moscow and New Delhi has endured the transition. It has increased in scope for the creation of a joint venture for servicing and modernizing Soviet aircraft.

For some time Islamabad has been showing a keenness to acquire Russian arms. Mr. Chernomyrdin's categorical remark that Russia has neither supplies arms to Pakistan nor is there any plan to do so in future should dispel doubts on this score.

An intergovernment trade agreement on Russian purchase of tea, medicines, soybean, and tobacco from India on a longterm basis is also significant. Efforts are underway to double bilateral trade in the near future. There are still many nitty gritties that remain to be worked out. Military technical cooperation can flourish only when Moscow shows a greater appreciation of New Delhi's sensitivity on the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty] and Kashmir.

Editorial Views 'Warming' Relations

BK2612120394 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 26 Dec 94 p 13

[Editorial: "Towards Warmer Ties"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Relations between India and Russia, which had entered a cold phase following the break up of the Soviet Union, seem to be warming up once again. The four-day visit of Russia's Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin to India, which concluded on Saturday [24 December], was indicative of the relations between the two countries gradually veering back to the original course. A highlight of the Russian Prime Minister's visit here was the signing of eight bilateral agreements covering a wide range of subjects including defence, research, trade and investment. Judging by the record of the previous visits by top dignitaries from either side, the signing of eight agreements is not a particularly impressive tally. What, however, is significant is that Mr Chernomyrdin chose to visit India at a time when there were pressing problems at home and the situation with regard to the breakaway republic of Chechnya was changing almost hourly. This needs to be seen in the context of the Russian experience of the past few years.

There has been a fairly articulate section in the post-Soviet leadership in Kremlin who have been rather keen on down-playing relations between New Delhi and Moscow. They have been of the view that in the post-Cold War world order, Russia had a lot more to gain in terms of trade, aid and technology from the west than from traditional trading partners such as India. It was in such a frame of reference that Moscow gave in to the U.S. pressure and reneged on the Cryo engine technology deal. It even tried to diversity its arms trade to destinations such as Islamabad. But the experience has not been a particularly productive one. It is thus that the visiting Prime Minister sought to cement mutual cooperation in defence by issuing a categorical assurance in New Delhi that his country will not supply any weapons to Pakistan. The fact that Mr Chernomyrdin mentioned the role of foreign mercenaries in the current fighting in Chechnya should evoke a sympathetic response in this country. For India has repeatedly drawn attention to the problem of trans-border terrorism and the induction of armed mercenaries from neighbouring countries. In India's experience, this is often done with the aim of destabilising existing institutions and making it difficult to sort out local problems through democratic means. The two countries should now act together to build international opinion against this form of intrusive adventurism.

Report on Joint Army Exercises With PRC Denied

BK2312130994 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 0846 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] While briefing newsmen, the official spokesman stated that there were some reports in the newspapers that personnel from Indian and Chinese Armies were holding joint exercises in Ladakh. The spokesman denied the reports saying that they were incorrect.

Police Arrest Pakistani 'Spy' in New Delhi

BK2512090194 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A Pakistani spy and his Indian contact were arrested in New Delhi yesterday. According to Delhi police, several vital documents were seized from them. The Pakistani, Shapal Khan, was later handed over to the Pakistani High Commission.

[Hong Kong AFP in English at 0348 GMT on 25 December, in a similar report, adds the following: "A civilian employee of the Indian Navy was arrested while allegedly passing secret documents to a member of the Pakistani mission here, police said Sunday.

"K.K. Parasuram, 56, an assistant with the Navy's directorate of weapons, was arrested late Saturday [24 December] in a residential district after he accepted 7,500 rupees (250 dollars) in exchange for the documents, the police said."]

Editorial Condemns Closure of Consulate in Karachi

BK2812104394 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 28 Dec 94 p 13

[Editorial: "Pak Belligerence"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan's decision to close down the Indian consulate general in Karachi is unfortunate since, through this act, it has firmly stamped its negative attitude towards improving relations with India. The closure order also reveals a sense of desperation that stems from Islamabad's failure to take control of the festering ethnic strike in Karachi. Islamabad had to see the Indian ghost behind the killings allegedly aimed at destabilising the Pakistan society. Not to blame India would have been an indirect admission that it has failed to eliminate the causes of violence in Karachi which is currently a heady cocktail of Mohajir factionalism, Sindhi-Mohajir rivalry and religious terrorism garnished by drug and gun-runners' money. President Leghari himself admits the highly complex nature of the Karachi situation. A prolonged Army operation in Sindh failed to improve conditions in Pakistan's commercial capital. When recently it was felt that strong-arm methods had become counter-productive, the troops were sent back to the barracks. Media reports and commentaries in Pakistan are full of critical references to the Government's inability to control the deteriorating ethnic situation due both to acts of omission and commission. This would strongly suggest that responsible opinion in Pakistan is not as convinced as Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto or President Leghari that India had been engineering trouble in Karachi and that its consulate general as the fountainhead of all mischief must be closed down.

Perhaps Islamabad's compulsion has to be traced beyond alleged Indian interference. Ever since Pakistan, on its own, folded up its consulate general in Bombay in a huff, it has been uncomfortable at the thought of India's relative advantage with the continuance of its mission in Karachi. Since India refused to oblige by pulling out of Karachi, Pakistan needed an excuse to close down the Indian mission. The escalating violence in Karachi provided the occasion to blame India. The ramifications of the Pakistan decision could eventually extend to a mutual reduction of the complement in the two countries' High Commissions, already depleted by tit-for-tat expulsions. In any case, with Pakistan's emphasis on extending covert ISI [Inter-services Intelligence] operations it may not need a large number of diplomats to function from the Indian capital. This deliberate move to worsen mutual ties and choking the channels of communication may not be the product of just extreme negativism. During its premeditated waste of an opportunity for talks with the Indian Foreign Secretary when he was in Pakistan recently, it became clear that Islamabad has shunned the path of negotiations except on its own terms. If Pakistan feigns to be innocent enough not to understand what its attitude would eventually lead to, it is not going to fool most governments of the world. It is not difficult to imagine which inclinations get stronger when communication snaps.

Paper Questions Government Treatment of Foreign Banks

BK2712092994 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 27 Dec 94 p 8

[Editorial: "Soft on Foreign Banks"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It is not very clear why the Government continues to treat foreign banks operating in India with kid gloves. When the country was going through an acute foreign exchange [forex] crisis and at the same time was rolling out the red carpet for international investors, certain key functionaries in the Finance Ministry and the Reserve Bank of India [RBI] had argued in private that the Government should be extra careful before initiating tough punitive action against foreign banks which were involved in the securities scandal. In today's changed scenario, when forex reserves are higher than ever before, and foreign investors are viewing India in a favourable light, such arguments are clearly no longer valid. If the authorities indicate that they would treat all banks—both Indian and foreign—on par, and would brook no attempt on the part of any banking organisation to flout the laws of the land, it would not just strengthen the country's financial system, but would also send out the right signals to the international business community.

The revised action taken report (ATR) on the scam gives the impression that the imposition penalties to the tune of Rs [rupees] 123 crore on foreign banks was "substantial penal action" on these banks for having committed irregularities in securities transactions. The Government has agreed with the Reserve Bank of India's view that it is not in favour of "taking the extreme step" of either cancelling or suspending the licences of these banks as had been suggested by the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) which inquired into the scandal. Be that as it may, there is no reason why the Government should accept at face value the explanations given by the central banks of the United Kingdom, Germany and Hong Kong which had given clean chits to banks here in response to the RBI's queries about whether or not the irregularities committed by foreign banks in India also violated the laws of their home countries.

The revised ATR stated that the Bank of England had contended that ANZ Grindlays Bank and Standard Chartered Bank had not violated UK regulations as the activities of the banks in question had not been undertaken in the UK and "nor did they appear to involve UK customers". The Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the German Bundesbank too said that banks headquartered in these countries had not violated their laws. The Government also needs to explain why in the case of two US banks involved in the scam, the revised ATR has omitted a portion contained in the earlier ATR wherein it had been stated that Citibank and Bank of America (BoA) had appearently violated US laws.

Government Criticized for Not Utilizing Foreign Aid

BK2712163594 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Comptroller and Auditor General [CAG] of India has criticized the government for not utilizing huge amounts of foreign aid even while negotiating new loans. The CAG report for the year ending March 1993 says the unutilized foreign loans stand at over 74,580 crore rupees. Power, irrigation, industry, and railways are among the major sectors which have failed to use external assistance.

Iran

Vice President Mohajerani Denies Resignation

LD2312163294 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 14 Dec 94 p1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vice-President for legal and Parliamentary Affairs Ata'ollah Mohajerani categorically denied his alleged resignation, carried in "KAYHAN HAVAI" news story.

Contacted for comment by IRAN NEWS, Mohajerani said the allegation was surprising and "this piece of news is totally baseless...there will be no resignation".

Mohajerani has served as vice-president for legal and parliamentary affairs for six years under the two terms of Hashemi-Rafsanjani's presidency. Previously he was the legal and parliamentary deputy for Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi.

Theology Students Demonstrate Against Montazeri

NC2612114894 Paris AFP in English 1119 GMT 26 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec 26 (AFP)—Iranian theology students have staged several demonstrations outside the house of a disgraced religious leader, Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri, in the holy city of Qom, a newspaper reported here Monday [26 December].

JAHAN-E ESLAM, representing Islamic radicals, said the students demanded the suspension of religious classes run by the ayatollah at the rallies held on Friday and Saturday.

They also chanted slogans supporting Iranian leader Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i.

In March 1989 Montazeri, 72, stepped down as the designated successor to the late founder of the Islamic republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni, amid criticism for attacking Iran's policies.

Since then he has lived under surveillance in Qom in central Iran, where he heads a Shiite Moslem religious school.

The students distributed leaflets in Qom on Saturday, urging people to assemble outside Montazeri's house to force him to cancel his classes.

But police intervened and sealed off access to the house to prevent any gatherings of more than two people, the daily said.

Montazeri's office told AFP the cleric had managed to continue holding classes.

Majles Orders Seizure of Satellite Reception Equipment

LD2512130394 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Following approval by the Majles, the Interior Ministry has been obliged to take steps, with the assistance of either law enforcement forces or the Basij resistance force, to collect satellite television receiving equipment as quickly as possible.

Our correspondent reports from today's Majles session that three more articles of the bill banning the use of satellite reception equipment, which comprised today's agenda for the Majles deputies, were approved.

On the basis of the approved articles, the period allowed for the collection of satellite reception equipment is one month from the date of the approval of this law. At the end of this period, anyone using such equipment will be sentenced to the punishments stated in the law.

The Interior Ministry is also duty bound to take steps, in coordination with the Intelligence Ministry and using every possible means, to prevent equipment which has no other use but to receive satellite programs from entering the country and being distributed. In addition to seizing such equipment, the ministry is obliged to hand the offenders and their equipment over to the relevant judicial authorities.

According to one of the other approved articles, all the equipment seized and confiscated on the basis of this law will be put at the disposal of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the purpose of expanding the country's radio and television coverage.

In addition, all the country's cultural organizations have been instructed to explain the destructive effects of receiving programs which lead people astray.

The task of examining the remaining articles of the bill banning the use of satellite reception equipment will continue in the open Majles session to be held on Wednesday.

Our correspondent also reports that, at the beginning of today's open session, Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri conveyed his greetings to the world's Christians, and especially to our Christian compatriots, on the anniversary of the birth of the great prophet His Holiness Jesus Christ, peace be upon him, and expressed the hope that his true followers will strive to spread justice and defend the oppressed against oppressors.

Mr. Nateq-Nuri continued by criticizing Russia's behavior toward the Muslim Republic of Chechnya and the use of force and violence in that republic. He added: We declare our willingness to help find a peaceful solution to this problem and to achieve an understanding between Russia and the Republic of Chechnya.

Council Notes Need To Step Up Iraq Border Security

LD2712134794 Tehran IRNA in English 1322 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 27, IRNA—The special security council for western Iran held a session chaired by Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati here Monday [26 December] to review the situation in northern Iraq.

In this meeting, the ways of safeguarding the country's western border were studied.

Hundreds of Iraqi Kurdish civilians and militants have been killed and wounded in fightings between members of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) over the past few days.

Present in the meeting were the governors general of Kurdestan, West Azarbaijan and Kermanshah as well as military and disciplinary force commanders who presented the latest reports on the western parts of the country.

The participants in the session also underlined the need to continue the government's plans to fortify western frontiers so as to block the infiltration of counterrevolutionary elements across the border.

It was also announced at the meeting that activities of counterrevolutionary elements and cross border trafficking of contraband goods this year have substantially reduced compared to last year.

Velayati on Islamic Uprising, Other Issues

NC2612074194 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 19 Dec 94 p 12

["Exclusive" interview with Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [ETTELA'AT] At present we are confronted by a phenomenon that the world calls an "Islamic uprising." We correspondents believe that this phenomenon, which is at the level of the masses, is a serious one. The Islamic Republic of Iran must adhere to the two principles, that is, non-intervention in the affairs of other countries and second, safeguarding the interests of Islam and the Muslims. How do you justify the contradictions that might possibly emerge?

[Velayati] During the 16 years that have elapsed since the victory of the Islamic Revolution and with the evolution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, these factors you mention have gradually taken shape and have found their own niche in foreign policy. As you mentioned, certain subliminal factors have been incorporated into these two issues, and these subtleties can only be handled with experience and assiduity, qualities that are not confined to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Other countries (especially the Western countries) have certain experiences and records regarding their preferred values that indicate a longstanding precedent. [passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] From your answer I can infer that, without flouting mandatory international principles (such as overt intervention in internal affairs of other countries), we can in any case perform our obligations to Muslim nations in our capacity as Muslims. Even if this support is verbal we have to declare our values.

Let us take the example of the Islamic Republic of Iran's viewpoint on the compromise between the Arabs and the Zionist regime in the region, which it has proclaimed clearly. Here the issue is that first we are facing the emergence of a new civilization. Just as the great leader stated: "A new civilization is emerging, and the Islamic Republic of Iran cannot be the source of such a civilization." This is a discussion that can be viewed in a theoretical framework and be bandied about in academic [preceding word in English] circles. However, a more practical application that we would like to discuss with you in your capacity as the foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran is: From this perspective, what can we expect from official international organizations such as the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO]?

[Velayati] The ICO is an organization that the Islamic countries consider useful. Its efficiency depends on the efforts of the Islamic countries. Its direction is related to the orientation that these Islamic countries give to it. In view of the fact that the Islamic countries have differing political directions, the orientation of the ICO—if we were to speak in physical terms—is the result of the conglomeration of forces moving in different directions. [passage omitted]

The Casablanca session endorsed our views. For example, the Islamic Republic of Iran was an active presence in all the main committees; and, when the need arose for subcommittees, we were also present in all of those. Nearly 400 pages of documents were prepared at this conference, and the Islamic Republic of Iran was directly involved in their preparation, submitting 200 pages discussing the principles that are in the draft of the documents (that is, 50 percent). Thus Iran played a basic role in the preparation, approval, and ratification of these documents. This is very different from what had caused apprehensions earlier.

[ETTELA'AT] It appears that the Islamic Republic of Iran has become more active regarding the polices (of the ICO) that you have mentioned, and this tribune [preceding word in English] seems appropriate for it to air its views. We encountered a new phenomenon at the Casablanca session and that was a new definition that some countries wish to have of terrorism. This has generated much apprehension among countries that rely on their people. The definition that the ICO has of terrorism is different from our definition. I want you to elaborate on the origin of this definition and also to tell us what efforts the Islamic Republic of Iran has made to present its views with regard to the term 'terrorism.'

[Velayati] You have mentioned an appropriate and important point. We were very active in this regard. The Westerners are used to this attitude (that is, they have created it and continue to pursue it) that they attempt to stick this cliched [preceding word in English] label of terrorist or terrorism on those countries that do not conform to or compromise with the Western viewpoint. This is not new. Whoever is not ready to accept the domination of the West is labelled a terrorist.

We have made efforts to combat such a plot and God willing, we will increase these efforts. What was approved at Casablanca conforms to a certain extent to what we had in mind. First we denounced all forms of terrorism there. I gave many interviews in which I stressed that we are one of the greatest victims of terrorism. Numerous great personalities were martyred in the aftermath of our revolution, and these terrorists now enjoy the sanctuary of the Westerners in the Western countries. We say that our officials have been assassinated by terrorists who are supported from abroad; that is not our claim alone. The terrorists from these little groups who have committed these acts have themselves admitted to their crimes.

In any case, when they perpetrated these crimes, they thought they could eliminate our government with such killings and publicly accepted responsibility for them. Now that they realize that they have not achieved their objectives and observe contradictory stances in the West, they have reneged on their initial postures and do not claim responsibility for their acts. But their record is still there.

We condemn terrorism because we are opposed to terrorism and are ourselves one of its greatest victims. However, our approach, and naturally that of other countries like us, is different from that of the ICO toward terrorism, which is more favorable to the West. At Casablanca it was approved that all kinds of terrorism, including government-sponsored terrorism, is to be condemned. When I say government-sponsored terrorism, I mean assassinations that are carried out by governments or involve governments. Westerners are opposed to this term, as its greatest application is to the Israeli regime, which flagrantly infiltrates Lebanon and abducts innocent individuals and then announces it. For example, I can cite the abduction of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd, one of the scholars in southern Lebanon, who is a cleric and has never been involved in any crime or atrocity.

This act in Western parlance would be the most blatant and conspicuous example of terrorism. However, Israel, which is their illegitimate offspring and which has always had their unstinting support, is exempt from these principles. Another example of their blatant terrorism is their attack on Ba'labakk, in which they martyred some of the residents and abducted Mustafa al-Dirani. At Casablanca, we incorporated this term of government-sponsored terrorism, which the Westerners have constantly opposed in international resolutions. This shows that what was approved at Casablanca was in keeping with the viewpoints of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Syria, and other similar countries.

Another point which is even more important is that, in an appraisal of the terrorism issue, the topic of liberation struggles—that is, those who are fighting for the liberation of their homeland—was separated from the issue of terrorism. For example, if you were to listen to American or Israeli radios, they very easily say "the Hamas terrorist group" or "the terrorist Hizballah group" and label them terrorists. What does Hamas do? It is seeking to liberate the territories in Palestine occupied by Israel. This is their most legitimate human right. What does Hizballah do? It is striving to liberate the territories of Lebanon that have been occupied by the Israelis, and the Israelis call them terrorists.

In this resolution we separated the destiny of the combatant and mojahed groups from terrorists and terrorism. We declared that we condemn the terrorists and terrorism but the issue of those who struggle for the liberation of their homeland is a separate matter, and this struggle is a commendable one.

Thus these two points that we succeeded in incorporating in the resolution make it completely different from what some Western circles favor, as it has a distinctiveness approved by the Islamic world.

[ETTELA'AT] As regards the definition that you have given, there are two aspects: First, is it possible—and this danger and concern exist—that, for example, the Egyptian ruling regime or the Algerian regimes would tackle the opposition in the same manner as they would approach the phenomenon of terrorism? Second, is the Islamic Republic of Iran making efforts to raise this common definition—which it has agreed upon with the Islamic countries regarding the categories of human rights and terrorism—as the general concept of the Islamic countries at international forums?

[Velayati] What is approved in the ICO and what is deduced by other countries in this regard are two separate issues. It is possible to make unpleasant inferences from every pleasant matter. What is important is that our words and decisions should be principled and within the framework of what we believe in, that is, they should be based on our principles. No one is in favor of terrorism, but confusing the Islamic and human struggles with terrorism is very warped rhetoric. As for whether we will raise this at international forums, it is possible to do so, and we will.

On principle, the ICO member countries in addition to the observer countries make up one third of the members of the United Nations. If an issue is approved by a consensus in the ICO, it means that we have at least one third of the votes of the world, and this is certainly effective. There are many instances when we have availed ourselves of these decisions in various international tribunes. [preceding word in English]

[ETTELA'AT] In view of your remarks, we have a strong tribune at our disposal and that is the ICO. We have such a consensus among the Islamic countries, for example, with regard to the Salman Rushdie issue. Why does Iran not make the world accept this belief, that the issue of Rushdie applies to the entire Islamic world and not only to Iran? We should propound the fact that Imam Khomeyni (may God be pleased with him) merely stated this Islamic belief in his historical decree, so that we can gain this consensus among the Islamic countries and propound it from the international rostrums.

[Velayati] Incidentally, this is what has been done. Salman Rushdie was once again condemned at the Casablanca session. In addition, the text of the decision states that Salman Rushdie has been condemned and the Muslims and Muslim countries express regret that some Western countries are supporting this accursed apostate.

We have gone a step further and in less than a month the Islamic countries have issued a statement in the United Nations reiterating their condemnation of Salman Rushdie. You ask why we do not avail ourselves of this situation; I may state that we have done so and I have personally done so as well. When I was questioned as to why the leader of the revolution had issued a fatwa [religious decree] against Salman Rushdie, who is a citizen of another country, I answered all the correspondents and politicians that this is not the view of the Islamic Republic of Iran alone but of the entire Islamic world. This is not only the view of the Shiites but of all the Muslims of the world, that whoever blasphemes His Holiness the Prophet (peace be upon him) deserves to have his blood shed. We document our remarks on this basis and when we reach this point they are silent. [passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] Let us talk about the ICO and about its finding its true niche, that is, it can be used as a forum for attaining the aspirations of the Islamic countries such as the establishment of a common market and for resolving regional differences. At present the greatest problem and preoccupation of the Islamic world is the Arab-Israel issue, and then there is the problem of the differences among some of the Islamic countries. To what extent do you think the ICO can take steps to resolve these differences? Will this organization be dragged onto the path from which the Zionist regime's policies will be imposed on the Islamic countries and be granted legitimacy?

[Velayati] If we seek to make sweeping generalizations in practical and executive matters, we will not achieve anything. We should plan for the implementation of the bases of our aspirations and principles. [passage omitted]

If a person says what he has in his heart and complains about his problems but does not do anything practical about them to eliminate the problems, they cannot be resolved. If he takes action at least there is a possibility of success. The greater the effort, the greater the success.

[ETTELA'AT] From your vantage point as the foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, can you tell us what were the gains of the Casablanca session now that it has ended?

[Velayati] It would be an appropriate prelude to this discussion if we were to mention the apprehension that existed in trying to assess what the session would be like, what the expectations would be, and the outcome. This will give us a better understanding of what you have mentioned as the gains of the session.

One of the concerns was the Palestine issue. In some foreign circles outside Iran, there had been talk that had inspired some apprehension which our great leader [Khamene'i] referred to in his recent exhortations; that is, a humiliating compromise that some are expecting with regard to the issue of Palestine might be lent some legitimacy at the Casablanca conference.

Another source of anxiety that stemmed from similar remarks was that we should do something to project a more desirable image of the Islamic world to the West. The third fear was that as regards the acute problems of the Islamic world such as that of Bosnia- Herzegovina, no steps would be taken. Another concern that was specifically aimed at Iran was that certain devious efforts would be made so that our request to host the eighth [ICO] session in Tehran would be jeopardized and that it would not be approved.

Regarding the first concern I can state that whatever was approved was not any worse than what has been done before. In fact, it was slightly better from some aspects. I wish to reiterate what some of our compatriots may not have noted; that is, the difference between the international climate regarding Palestine and our stance. If one fails to take this into consideration it is possible one may make an error of judgment. [passage omitted]

No one in the world from the former Eastern Bloc, the Nonaligned Movement, the Chinese, the Third World, the Indians, Africans, Arabs, or Muslims has a stance like ours regarding the Palestine issue. Therefore, when in international organizations resolutions are approved on the basis of a majority vote or a consensus, it is not possible to approve issues with the vote of only one country.

Thus, what we want has never been approved in any international organization and we do not foresee it being approved in the short term. So what is the solution? We participate in these organizations and express our views frankly and without any reservations in accordance with the exhortations of the great leader. Resolutions are approved in different forms but our views are also mentioned and documented. The same was done as regards the statement approved at the Casablanca summit which was no worse than the previous ones. They accepted the principle of the Arab-Israeli talks which is not opposed by any country except the Islamic Republic of Iran. [passage omitted]

The head of the conference (the King of Morocco) presented his summarized views on the day the conference concluded, stating that there is a difference of opinion among Islamic countries regarding the Palestine issue and there was no consensus achieved. Since the ICO is based on a consensus, it was stated that no such consensus has been achieved on the Palestine issue and other recent issues such as Gaza-Jericho.

Thus, the Gaza-Jericho compromise did not get a vote at the ICO and, therefore, the concern that had existed—that the despicable actions of some of the Islamic countries or some internal Palestinian factions would gain legitimacy at the ICO—did not materialize. In fact, some points were stressed that did not exist in previous resolutions and this is one of the positive aspects of the recent session.

The other point was that Jerusalem is the capital of an Islamic homeland and should be the capital of Palestine. Second, the condemnation of the repressive actions by Israel, and third, emphasis on the need for the liberation of occupied territories of Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria. We approve this decision as well; only the individual inferences differ. When we mention the liberation of Palestine, we mean the liberation of the entire land of Palestine but some others imply territory usurped in 1967. The division of the mosque of Abraham (peace be upon him) was also condemned.

Another source of apprehension was that there were some who advocated that we should make some changes in order to project a more favorable image in the West, since the Muslims and Islamic values are under pressure from the West. We vehemently opposed this and I frankly stated that it should be the other way around. It is the West that should change its attitude so that the hatred against some of the Western countries should be eliminated. This was approved and I should state that the spirit that prevailed over the decisions was what the Islamic Republic of Iran had in mind and this was a precursor to many of the decisions that have been made in the ICO.

The next concern was that of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We have heard the criticism that we should not content ourselves with paying lip service with regard to Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Bosnians are under immense pressure and they are Muslims who are being mercilessly killed on the front lines of the Islamic borders in Europe. Something should be done. As regards the Islamic Republic of Iran, friends and foes alike concede that the most effective supporter of Bosnia-Herzegovina among those who have provided assistance to it is Iran. [passage omitted]

Our next step was to set up a fund for the assistance of Bosnia- Herzegovina. We also proposed that a volunteer force from Islamic countries based on Article 51 of the UN Charter should go to Bosnia- Herzegovina and defend the people but this did not gain the requisite vote.

Our fourth concern was that the eighth ICO session should be held in Tehran. (Under the previous agreement it was to be Senegal). Prior to the convocation of the summit session, there were rumors of other countries, such as Pakistan and Lebanon, competing to host the next session. [passage omitted]

After much lobbying it was decided that the next session would be held in Tehran. Our colleagues in the various committees started their intensive efforts in this regard a month ago. The experts session had been held in Jeddah four months earlier, where the groundwork for the subsequent decisions had been laid and in which the Iranian delegations had participated actively.

The ministerial session had also been held in the beginning of the past week in Casablanca with much activity on the part of the Iranian delegation. This activity continued at the summit session and as I mentioned before, a considerable number of positive decisions were made at the ICO session in which the Islamic Republic of Iran had an effective role and it may be said that the success was not attained very easily but after our round-the-clock efforts.

Rafsanjani Interviewed by Academics

LD2712102394 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1800 GMT 25 Dec 94

[Interview with President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani by Mohammad Javad Larijani, member of the Majles foreign commission; Dr. Gholam 'Ali Haddad-Adel, deputy minister of education; and Deputy Commerce Minister Asghar Nahavandian; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Mohammad Javad Larijani] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. We should thank your excellency first for making this warm and friendly get-together possible, especially for millions of viewers who I am sure will join us in expressing our appreciation. With your permission, I would like to begin by asking....[pauses] and it will not be too odd if I begin with foreign policy. Your Excellency shouldered many important responsibilities after the revolution, and, most notably, you were speaking to others in the world. The world has also seen both how you behave and what your views are and has accepted you as an international leader. It is natural, therefore, for our nation to expect that with such a director of affairs, our foreign policy should have many prominent features. Where does our foreign policy stand? People sometimes find that they have fallen between two stools. On the one hand we really have a large amount of prestige in the world, and we have credibility. Millions of Muslims are fond of us and alert to what we say, and our messages have reached many places never reached before. On the other hand, we see that some of the countries and many of the international forums, especially in the West, criticize us a lot. One day they say your human rights record is bad; another day they say you do not respect women's rights; and yet another day they say you are terrorists. Now, apart from conspiracies, which have their own dimensions, is there a misunderstanding between us and the world? It may be that the world does not understand us or that we cannot present ourselves well to the world. It would be interesting to hear your opinion. How do you assess our position in the world. Is our approach toward the world a correct one? What are our difficulties? What are our achievements?

[Rafsanjani] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Of course, if what the world says is all based on facts and realities and carries goodwill with it....[pauses] and we know it does not since they approach us on the basis of their own particular prejudices and interests. But, I do not necessarily think that we have exhausted all channels in presenting the realities we face to the world. We should weigh each side of the argument.

The outside world harbors certain enmities because the aspirations that became relevant for us during the revolution are not liked by many hostile governments, and many of the world's mouthpieces are opposed to these aspirations. They overlook many facts when it comes to us. Even if we explain and even when we produce witnesses, they still ignore it.

But I do think that much of the poison they spit at us could be neutralized by removing the pretexts on which they are based. If this happens, they would not have any pretexts to back their allegations; or, if they did, they could be confronted with responses that are convincing. Also, there are certain cases which we ourselves should be careful about. Anyway, we should take into consideration the international situation. Islamic aspirations are our principles but attitudes toward these principles could vary when it comes to the propagation of our own thoughts. Nevertheless, there is a principle we cannot put aside, and it also threatens the interests of some of the powers. We should thus be expecting some of these hostile attitudes about which you are expressing concern. But not to the extend that exists now, since even our true friends do not perhaps know everything they should know about us.

[Larijani] Yes, it seems that there is room for greater investment in connection with this problem of understanding between us and the rest of the world, that is, the question of our image in the world.

[Rafsanjani] Without a doubt. At the moment, we are making very little use of the instruments of the day [modern technology]. We generally expect that we can say what we have to say here, in prayer sermons, in newspapers, on the radio or in a speech and that people everywhere will understand us. Or, at any rate, we should also speak in the language of the day using modern terminology. We should do both of these things: Use the instruments of the day and use the particular culture of the day. We must convey our message to the world in much more extensively than we do at the moment. [passage omitted]

[Nahavandian] There is something in our culture, whether spoken or unspoken, conscious or unconscious—a tendency toward negative thinking which is thought to be necessary at times, when one is analyzing things. Whenever the people hear you speaking about economic issues, in your discussions, when you are attending an opening ceremony, giving a speech or interview, you are always very positive, very hopeful, enthusiastic and so on. The following question naturally comes to mind: Is this because you are the head of the executive branch of government and it is your task to give hope to the nation, in relation to the economy, in relation to officials involved in running the economy; or do you really see the future in a positive light and the economy as being in the process of growth and development? Is your own thinking, your own interpretation, positive or not?

[Rafsanjani] It is definitely positive. I have made a pact with God to speak honestly and sincerely at all times, and not to say things I do not believe. I do not think that being engaged in politics means that you have to present things that are not true as being true. I think that if the people knew as much about the country as I do, they too would be optimistic and cheerful and that many of the negative interpretations that are made by various individuals, based on how they see things from their own angle, would not occur or would take some other form.

We are really not a country that needs to worry about the future or a country with insoluble problems. Iran is a very powerful country, and it has very favorable conditions. No one would have believed that with $1 trillion in war damages the country would be able to stand on its own feet so easily and that the lives of the people could be managed so well. This is due to the country's rich resources and the role played by the people.

I speak in specific terms. I ask: Where do you see problems? Where do you see dead ends? Why this negative thinking? The country is traveling a satisfactory path in all fields. Start with universities: a country which is managing to educate 1,100,000 students. We did not even have 200,000 university students before the revolution. Universities are being built on an extensive scale.

In relation to infrastructural issues: When we decided to tackle the infrastructure, we made rapid progress even though we were rather short of resources because of the war. Look, in your country, agriculture, that is, the country's food requirements, are close to domestic self-sufficiency, although a great deal of potential remains unexploited. Why should we worry? If we push ourselves hard for one year, we will no longer need to import any food. If we use it correctly, that is. Why worry? [passage omitted]

In terms of energy, this country has no problems. All other countries have energy worries. If there is the slightest disturbance in the Persian Gulf, the Japanese people will have problems. The same goes for the United States and Europe. Here, people now have gas on their doorsteps. Gas pipelines are now supplying 200 towns, and this number is growing rapidly. Look at how Pakistan is trying so hard to persuade the Americans to build a power station for them; it does not have sufficient electricity. Here, you decided in a short space of time and you built modern power stations over and above your needs. [passage omitted]

Why should we be pessimistic in such a country? Why should we be upset? If one looks at the indicators, the statistics, the figures, the progress, and so on.... [pauses] One should ask those who engage in negative thinking, one should ask those who see the country in pessimistic terms: Where does the country have serious problems now? Of course, things are not ideal. I would never suggest such a thing. We are some distance from the ideal. I am saying that we do not have problems as such.

We did feel we had certain defense problems during the war. We had problems during the war. Now—and there are few countries like us in the Third World—our country supplies the bulk of its own defense needs. In the course of five or six years we have turned from being a total consumer into a total producer and we can sell arms now in many fields.

Our defense strength, our cultural strength.... [pauses] Now, in the course of our discussion here, I expect you to refer to issues which cause concern. Perhaps I will share your worries then. As it is, I believe there is no reason to worry about our country, although of course we must act more rapidly. My optimism does not mean that I think we should rest now. We must continue to make efforts. We have no problems, but we ought to live even better than we do now. We can live better.

[Larijani] With your permission, I would now like to refer to an issue which is sometimes a cause for concern. Will you permit me?

[Rafsanjani] I welcome it.

[Larijani] The development of Iran is an important objective for you, the esteemed leader, and in fact for all Iranians. That is, everyone wants to see Iran made into a developed, strong, and healthy country which enjoys the world's respect. This, therefore, is essentially a national aspiration. But how are we going to move towards that direction? [passage omitted]

There is worry in our country now. On the one hand, some people are really worried about the entry of foreign investment into Iran. They think this would be a sign of moral and ideological decline, and it would definitely bring about corruption. On the other hand, failure of Iran to develop is an outright tragedy, not only for the Iranian nation, but also for the entire Islamic world. This is because we are the only country whereupon the eyes of the Islamic world are focused.

One of areas which might cause a slight worry is that perhaps our performance record in attracting or deploying capital and investment, indigenous or foreign, shows a slight weakness. This could put our future development under a question mark. On the other hand, there is also the issue of sensitivity toward our moral values to consider. What is the opinion of your excellency, as the architect of Iran's development and as the person who is guiding the country toward that end, about such an important issue?

[Rafsanjani] When you look at these two issues next to each other, a new debate will emerge. Part of what you are asking is an implicit question about the basis for all my hope and optimism. The other part of your question is about the pace of development. If we really want to develop the country at a desirable pace, which is according to the country's means and abilities, then we have to use some capital from other sources; that is the others' capital, technology, also their science of management, which is a complex area and is growing fast in today's world.

One of the grounds needed for attracting others' capital is the issue of security for investments. Usually, the owner of capital refrains from making investments in an insecure environment. He would prefer to deposit it in a foreign or domestic bank, if he is thinking correctly, and be content with the little income it would generate. If his mind is not all that healthy, then he would use it in unhealthy channels, such as middlemanship, hoarding, etc.

As I have referred to this issue in my previous remarks on different occasions, one of our tasks is to prepare the suitable grounds in the country for attracting investments. Without preparing the ground, one cannot expect to attract investment.

[Larijani] Can you tell us what these grounds are?

[Rafsanjani] The investor wants profit. Nobody will bring his capital here without expecting profit; that is to say, an assured and certain profit. Second, he wants security for his investment. That is to say, he wants assurance that he is not going to lose his capital. In Iran, we have some indigenous capital, but we have not even attracted enough of this yet. The priority of course belongs to such capital, some of which is inside Iran while some is abroad, that is to say, capital and assets in the hands of Iranians abroad, who have management knowhow or other assets. They can bring these here.

The various tribunes in society, the media and other cultural organs have an important duty here in preparing the social atmosphere. It is true that we do not want to be subservient to capitalists. But if a certain amount of capital is to come into the country and create employment and livelihood for those who do not own any capital, and also help the country's development, while at the same time generating profit for the owner of the capital as well, then nobody will oppose the principle of this kind of investment. We must pave the way for such a process. But, in my opinion, these grounds have not yet been prepared to a desirable degree in our country. But the situation is not totally negative either.

At the outset of the development plan, we decided to attract some capital from abroad in order to carry out unfinished tasks. We realized that such a thing was possible, and during the first three years of the plan, we managed to attract as much investment as—or perhaps slightly less than—what the plan had projected. It was with these investments that we managed to carry out many infrastructural projects, such as the petrochemical, oil, and steel industries, as well as construction of dams and development of ports, communications, and transport systems. The plan had not made any further projections, while at the same time, during the last few years of the plan's lifespan, social conditions underwent some changes. We, therefore, did not continue the process.

You see, at the moment we can bring three types of capital into the country. One is, we bring in capital in the form of a loan and all the undertakings which go with it, and then manage it ourselves. Another form is that we bring the capital to the country together with the owner of the capital. In such a case we would not be accepting any risks, so huge profits may be involved, as against the first form where credit and management are of paramount importance. Another form is that of buy-back. In this case, capital would come here to do work, and what this capital would produce would be returned to the country.

So far, we have not have had any hesitation about two of the above. The buy-back method, as ratified and incorporated in the plan bill, has not been very successful.

In relation to the first type, through finance and foreign credits, we have been able to bring as much capital into the country as we wanted. However, at the time they were not prepared to grant long-term loans to us. Some people are now criticizing the Central Bank for opting for short-term loans, which later brought about certain pressures on the bank. The reason for this was that circumstances were different then, and they were not prepared to give us eight-year or nine-year loans. At that time, we attracted as much capital and investment as the calculations made by our experts about the situation in the oil markets allowed us. If we had wanted more money, we would have been able to get it. But we opted for caution.

The third form, which you are probably referring to, is direct investment; that is, when they come here on their own account and responsibility. This should have a sound legal basis, which we possess according to our present laws, stating that such investments are possible as far as they do not exceed 49 percent. However, those who come here want more than 49 percent. They want to carry out the management themselves, so that they can be responsible for their profits.

The Majles has to cooperate to a degree, while on the other hand, a suitable atmosphere should be created in society. I personally am not against attracting investment. I favor it. Suitable conditions, nonetheless, have to be created in our country for such a process.

In any case, it should be stressed that there is no need for concern in the country even without such investments. The debate is over whether we want to fulfill our potentials quickly—which I favor—or not.

[Nahavandiyan] If you permit me, I would like to use this as an excuse for appraising the first development plan. Praise be to God, the discussions have now ended, and the second development plan has been ratified, and you have put it forward for implementation.

There were some successes and also some problems in the first development plan. These problems formed a basis for a more careful appraisal of the second development plan. One of the issues was that although in the first development plan one of the main aims was privatization, when we look at the figures for the bases of capital, we see that despite achieving some success the composition still favors investment by the public sector at the expense of the public sector.

Moreover, within the debate on privatization, one of the questions was about the degree of the first development plan's success in this area. That is to say, to what degree were we able to reduce the size of the state sector while at the same time increasing its efficiency and productivity?

This issue has a pivotal importance for success in the second development plan. What is your opinion on this?

[Larijani] If you allow me, I would like to add something to this. Investment in Iran, or the act of employing investments [pauses], you referred to the important issue that there is capital in Iran which are not employed in the right way and are instead moving in improper channels. The issue of using investment in Iran in practice faces many small problems, the sum total of which creates a massive problem. Some say that the reason for this is the presence of a large bureaucratic apparatus, which is like an octopus and is territorial and unwelcoming. Another reason may be that we have not paved the way for this very important process [privatization]. Has your excellency ever investigated this, or has the government ever wondered about the factors which impede the deployment of capital in Iran?

[Haddad] The changes in the laws are also one of the factors which give rise to economic insecurity for investors. This is to say, after a time when the government's policy opens the way for investment, certain other decisions on foreign currency or, for instance, import-export regulations are made. The lack of stability in economic and financial regulations are issues which can be viewed within the framework of this debate. I thought I had better put this issue to you as well, now that all other factors have been mentioned.

[Rafsanjani] Mr. Haddad has reached this topic from a different angle. All the three points put forward by the gentlemen are present in different ways. When I say these are present, I mean that they prevent the formation of an ideal situation. However, when we appraise the first development plan, we have to be satisfied with it. We did not formulate our plans on the basis of illusions and imaginations, and instead we pursued—and still pursue—the work with reliance on such realities.

As I said before, if all suitable grounds are provided, then the pace of work will increase considerably. But if we remain content and say that we are after all living with some realities which dictate that these matters should be resolved gradually, then the evaluation of the past will take a more proper shape.

You see, in the first development plan, a large number of people came forward and made investments. Perhaps no one knows about them all, although I am well informed about this. [passage omitted]

It is not correct that we should think the people have not come forward. For instance, just look at the exchange market, where there are many applications for shares, but there are not enough shares available.

Of course, we have not yet reached the ideal situation, but even with the existing grounds, the trend of privatization is here with us, and the flow of capital continues. Many of the tasks which used to be carried out exclusively by the government five or six years ago are now in the hands of the people. There was a time when the government used to have a great deal of involvement in the area of foreign trade, and used to import whatever we wanted. But now, the main part of foreign trade is non-governmental. The same also applies to the industrial sector. But it is not at a favorable level. If we want to bring it to a favorable level, at least, the banks should be more active than they are now. They should attract more money and circulate more money. The regulations to which you referred should protect people in their daily lives. We should provide security for the people. For example, if someone owns a factory, he should not be defamed on charges of capitalism. If one owns a farm, he should not be defamed. He should be allowed to work. If they work badly, they can be dealt with.

We should encourage those people who engage in production work. A person should be proud of himself when he takes an initiative and contributes to production. We should encourage these types of work. We should place value on work and production within the Islamic Republic. [passage omitted]

[Dr Haddad] [passage omitted] My question is that some people are concerned that, God forbid, we might forget the traditional, cultural, and Islamic values in the interests of the pace of development. In one word: What is the model of development that you have in mind for the country? What are the characeristics of a developed Islamic society that you seek, in which traditional values are observed and the country does not remain underdeveloped?

[Rafsanjani] This question was also raised by Mr. Larijani in a different manner. It seems that the people are concerned that foreign capital might bring in some unsuitable culture. Well, it is up to us to safeguard our values. There is no compulsion to say that foreign capital should necessarily bring in some anti-Islamic culture. As long as we remain careful, we can fully benefit from every gift provided by nature as well as the comfort of material things. We can modify these gifts to serve our values. What comes to my mind is what we have incorporated in the plan.

I can claim now that we are seeking to have a rich, developed, happy and secure society. At the same time we can add up all the names which goes with piety such as contentment. Such objectives cannot be measured by statistical figures. Mr. Larijani and his colleagues are dealing with the plan. They should see all the figures and statistics. When you study the plan you will realize that we have spent hours preparing it. We have had lengthy discussions and have set up councils for every department. There are educational councils, training, economic, industrial, agricultural and other councils.

All members of these councils are reliable experts who have sat round and discussed their proposals for a long time. The outcome of our joint discussions were then handed over to the Majles. The plan has envisaged everything including the growth rate, the number of university lecturers and students, the number of schools, hospital beds, etc. Your desired Islamic values are fully incorporated into the plan. The Majles then debates the plan and amends minor points of criticism. In my opinion we now have a plan with figures and timetable corresponding to our resources.

Fortunately for every article of the plan we have proposed an alternative. That is, if the resources were to increase above the cautious figures we have anticipated, we would increase the expenditure limits; otherwise we would stick to the secure cautious figures we have put down in the plan. In other words, we have not overestimated any revenue or underestimated any expenditure to be concerned about the final figures. Frankly there is no cause for concern and development in Iran will not have negative consequences. [passage omitted]

[Nahavandian] If I may, I would like to raise a theoretical question. Before the revolution, when we wanted to defend the idea that Islam has a social vision, has an economic policy, has political policy, we were forced to engage in theoretical arguments and debates with rival theories. We had to argue that Islam has something to say, has a system, has proposals and prescriptions to offer that are different from socialism and capitalism. Now, in terms of practical experience—if you could speak about the crystallization of this question, not in terms of a breakdown of statistics, but in the overall conception of a development plan, which is based on neither capitalism nor socialism - with reference to the actual experiences learned from the world, the failures, the defeats which each of those have had. Now, if arguing in terms of a proof, what would you say about the evidence and indications in terms of differences?

[Larijani] If I may, I would like to add something to this question.

[Rafsanjani] It is all right for you. You gang up together to ask your questions and leave me on my own to come up with an answer.

[Larijani] Yes, the policy of adjustment which your eminence made the axis of the country's development plan—of course, I am one of the keen and fervent supporters of this policy myself—is, in practice, a prescription for reform; that is to say, everything must be assessed on the basis of its worth, talent, and economic weight. What I want to say is that we also have a problem from this angle in the five-year plan: the rate of growth. In the second five- year plan, you have limited the rate of growth a little bit; you have increased welfare programs and so on; you have increased subsidies, so that something known as social justice is taken into account. In fact, balancing these two things crystallizes those values referred to earlier. The point that the rate of growth is reduced may itself pose a problem for us. It is as if you have hung weights on an airplane that is on the point of taking off. If we climbed upward more rapidly, maybe we would be able to maintain a better balance later. This aspect of development may actually manifest in itself part of the cultural worries. The government is raising the issue of a program for medical services for the first time in the history of our country—on that vast scale which was discussed in the Majles. Well, this is unprecedented. Medical services on such a vast scale are rare in the world. Even in the United States, it is being approved only recently. Now, what I want to ask is: are we not hanging too many weights on the airplane, preventing it from take off? I am raising exactly the opposite worries than those expressed earlier.

[Rafsanjani] I have to address several points now with all your questions. You ask what kind of socio-economic program we have chosen in practice as opposed to the two ideological schools of Marxism and communism, on the one hand, and capitalism on the other. For my own part, I truly—without wanting to defend some previous history—I am arriving at exactly the same conclusion as the one we had arrived at earlier. Before the revolution, when we studied Islam, we saw things in exactly the same way. We used to have arguments with Marxists in prison with the National Front, the Freedom Movement and so on. We argued about many different ideas.

We had reached the conclusion in our arguments that Islam advocates a mixed economy. There is also such an interpretation in the world: mixed economy [last two words in English]. Islam cannot conform to the official socialism which existed in the world; nor can it conform to capitalism in the form which—when push comes to shove—they say everything is a deviation from the norm. It cannot conform to either of those in that sense. It has a guided economy. In many instances, the environment is completely free; it respects property to the highest degree; it is completely against usurpation; it totally safeguards the right to labor, the right to the fruits of labor in its broad sense, whether it be a manager, a thinker, a laborer, or whoever.

On the other hand, it strongly maintains the government's rights, as an ever-present observer which can interfere wherever necessary. It does not believe that everything can be left on its own.

This is a mixed situation. In some things, of course, circumstances also change; different times dictate changes in economic conditions. In some situations, we believe that there must really be government intervention and in some situations, the government must not intervene at all and must allow things to take their own course. Circumstances differ.

We have, therefore, prepared our plan with this idea in mind. Now that we have prepared our plan, it is not as if we have assigned everything to the private sector or the government. Of course, our hands are tied to a certain extent. Because we have inherited certain things and we have to pursue them gradually with an intention to reach that point.

The issue that Mr. Larijani referred to and said that weights are being added to this aircraft, well the issue of subsidies are the same everywhere in the world in general. Those people who think seriously about social justice cannot ignore the rights of the deprived in the present in the hope of reaching a good far future. They have to carry these weights with them. It is like a passenger who sits in an aircraft and carries some extra baggage. He makes the aircraft a little heavier; but, this is a reality which exists now.

During the first plan we allocated around 21 percent of our resources to providing subsidies. If we calculate it without foreign currency subsidies, we spent 11 percent; and if we consider it with allowances for the rate of exchange we spent 21 percent on subsidies.

We increase this sum a little more in our second plan. The reason we increased it was that we thought a number of our adjustment policies might put heavy burden on the economically weak people. We had to take that decision. I know that this slows down the process. The fact that the government has to borrow a large sum from the state treasury and spend it and does not use it for the construction, it means a slower movement. If there had been such a situation in the society that we were all coordinated, and we could have clarified the issues to the people with coordination. If we had not raised the expectations for no particular reason. If we had not fanned up the consumption trend. That would have been more logical to use some of these resources for the reconstruction and development of the country to achieve our targets more rapidly.

For example, employment: Sometimes we faced contradiction over this issue. Employment is an important issue for us. Islam has stressed it as well as the world and the people want it too. No one wants to be without work and have something to eat. Employment needs investment. We should allow a sum to provide employment. For example, if we take this sum, from the Imam's relief committee or welfare organization or other organs and use it to create employment, it might take a year to bear fruit. During the same year, the pressure which might be on us from another part of the society would make it hard for us. Therefore, we have to divide our resources. We have to use a part of it for these resources so that they can have acceptable living conditions and use part of it to provide employment and part for infrastructural work.

In the Majles, you asked us to do both. You asked us to create 600,000 jobs and approved a large sum to be given, for example, to the relief committee or any other foundation. These two do not add up. We had to compromise. We decided to adopt a measure which is a combination of the two. In view of the plan articles which were presented to the Majles, we have taken a combination and presented a new figures. Anyway, the plan will answer these questions. The plan will say clearly that your plan could be implemented with a certain growth figure; and if you wish to help the deprived regions ... [incomplete sentence as heard]

For example there is a very serious discussion in our society. At the moment if we spend money in certain parts of the country, we receive a speedy return and a better return. Those places where there is water, roads, electricity and manpower can be reached with no difficulties, we can harvest everything quickly. But, if we take the same sum of money to a deprived area, the return period will be later and less. But, can we continue with this policy to the end? Of course not. It means those rich regions will become richer and richer and the deprived regions remain more deprived. This will slow down the movement. But, it is a slowness which ultimately will help us to reach a good point. Justice will not harm us. You should search for answers in these discussions about figures and data issued in the plan. You should see whether a good approach has been taken towards this issue in the plan or not.

[Haddad] Do you consider balance in the plan to be very important?

[Rafsanjani] Yes, very much so. Really we try hard. It is one of our hardest efforts in the government. The cooperative sector wants it for itself, the rural development sector wants if for itself, the expansion of industry wants it for itself. Good management means we should be able to have a balance among them. [passage omitted]

In this year's budget bill, which we have submitted to the Majles, we introduced a new thing concerning farm lands which are developed around dams. As you know, with each dam we construct, some lands—which are mainly owned by the state—are added to the arable lands of the country. We have allocated some money to be used as loans for the Basijis and the other Hezbollah youth, who would be enabled to go there and engage in economic activities. [passage omitted]

We think that if the Basijis and the war-disabled properly use these prioritized facilities that we give them, they, as forces who have invested their efforts in society, can have the opportunity to benefit from the fruits of development. [passage omitted]

[Larijani] If our friends here allow me, I would now like to deal with a different arena, and this would concern you personally to an extent.

Your Excellency! You have the management of the country at a macro level at your disposal. If fact one must say the most macro type of management in the country.

On the basis of our constitution, our political system has at least three important spheres; the leadership, the presidency, and the Majles, all of which—in some way or another—are derived from the will of the people.

On the issue of relations with leadership, you have made the issue very clear. Even when the enemies were trying to induce certain things about difference of opinion and suchlike, your remarks left no room for doubt. Of course, one cannot expect two people to think in exactly the same way. But as far as carrying out the work is concerned, you have clarified the course of the discussion and decision-making.

The relation with the Majles is also a very interesting experience. Your experiences are very important for the future generations. They have to know how this system has worked.

For instance, during the case of impeachment of [Mines and Metals Minister] Mr. Mahluji, you referred to the story about the age of the snake [as heard]. This was very meaningful within that context.

I am very interested to know about your experiences in regulating these relations, in particular with the Majles, and especially with the fourth Majles. Of course, you yourself have had some parliamentary experiences and carry some parliamentary characteristics. What is your experience? Do you see it as working easily, and to what degree can one work within such a system?

[Rafsanjani] But in any case, one of the most important issues for the state, now and in the future, is the links between the executive organs, those in charge of them, and the leader, on the one hand, and, on the other, between them and the Majles and the Judicial branch. It is fortunate that we have our current circumstances, and it would be convenient if this pattern could always continue. Concerning the leader, things have turned out like this accidentally.

At the moment, I, in the service of the esteemed leader [pauses]... we are very intimate friends, just like any two individuals who are close to each other in any community. We share the same objectives and the same work, and we happen to have held office during the same period. We think alike. This harmony between us comes naturally to us. It is not as if we impose our views on each other. For instance, we quite naturally hold the same views about perhaps 95 of every 100 issues we discuss. There are times when our views may differ, but on this score too we fortunately know where we stand because the leader determines the general policies and all the organs of the system are there to serve him.

As to executive tasks, daily tasks, the esteemed leader has an enlightened approach and does not usually interfere or meddle in these issues. He leaves each one of us alone to get on with our jobs within the framework of our policies. Normally there are no problems at all. On the contrary, we benefit from the leader and the illustrious status enjoyed by the velayat-e faqih [guardianship of the supreme leader] among the masses, as a good support for the work we do.

Of course, this working relationship is a matter of personalities formed by common experiences, but I think that the nature of this working relationship will remain the same in the future.

Regarding the Majles, again it is personal and individual issues that have been to some extent effective in bringing about this harmony between us. Many of those serving in the Majles are our friends and long-standing colleagues. For example, the Majles speaker and I got to know each other when we were studying in the Fayziyeh seminary [in Qom] in the arena of struggle, and we have remained together since. He is a person I deeply admire. I know him very well.

The Majles presidium is made up of people like this, on the whole, and many Majles deputies are like this. Thus, an atmosphere of trust prevails among us and we have not encountered any problems during this period.

I also wish to see the Majles perform its duties as an independent, legislative supervisory body. I try to promote and strengthen this kind of spirit among the deputies because I know that an independent and free deputy can be a great asset and blessing to the people. I would not like to see any deputies being influenced by others into doing some things. So, not only do we not have any problems, but, on the contrary, in many cases, the Majles officials solve our problems.

Naturally, I do not expect to approve of everything the Majles decides. There are times when I am not in favor of something, but I consider that the Majles has every right to attend to its business, ad this it does. So, this degree of disagreement should always be accepted since it exists under every parliamentary system and in every society in which democracy prevails.

[Larijani] I would like to continue asking personal questions, unless, of course, our friends here...

[Other voices, interrupting] No, please continue.

[Larijani] It is of course very early to talk about the presidency and presidential elections; even countries that are experienced in these kinds of events do not begin discussing them two or three years in advance. But, this is an interesting political issue for our people, especially because it concerns your own person.

There is also the question which has been broached recently—perhaps by some of the friends who work with you—that is, the question of changing the Constitution to make it possible for Your Excellency to continue for another term as president. Of course, it is not unreasonable to change the Constitution; one has to always review and improve some sections of it if it is thought necessary. Have you anything to say about these issues or these ideas? That is, what do you, Excellency, think about this matter. Of course, I accept that it is too early to discuss it.

[Rafsanjani] But then others have talked about it before you and it has now turned into a public issue. I personally do not consider it appropriate in terms of society in general or of history that a constitution should be amended for the sake of an individual. If amendments are needed, that will be for other reasons. If the Constitution is really not good, it should be amended some time, but not because of one individual.

I personally do not wish to carry the burden of this heavy executive responsibility any longer than has been stipulated. I think we should hold the presidential elections on the basis of the existing Constitution, especially because—since I am the object of attention—it is quite common for people who have been in the vanguard of revolutionary movements and have played big roles in those revolutions to do certain things like turning their positions into permanent ones. But this is not a good convention, and it has not worked in places where it has been applied. In addition, we do not need to do this. There are many powerful personalities in our country who have not had the opportunity to show what they are capable of. We have to give them an opportunity to enter the arena.

For my part, if I am not president I will continue working for the revolution just as I am doing now. What is the difference between the time before I became president and now. From the day of the victory of the revolution, I have gone wherever the revolution needed me and made myself present there. I will carry on being present.

People should not question the Constitution, especially since it concerns me. Elections should be based on the present Constitution.

[Larijani] Of course our nation looks up to Your Excellency as a national asset. Under all circumstances Your Excellency is considered a bastion of the entire system and revolution...

[Rafsanjani, interrupting] I am a soldier. What you have just said about me is more than I deserve. But if the people accept me as a soldier, I am here. I will always be wherever I am needed.

[Haddad] If you agree, we want to talk about training and education.

[Rafsanjani] Why should I not agree? I fully agree.

[Haddad] [passage omitted]

[Rafsanjani] [passage omitted] Concern was expressed by Mr. [Mohammad 'Ali] Najafi [education minister] in a speech some days ago that his budget is less than he expected this year. It seems that in the budget bill that we presented to the Majles, the education budget was cut. At the time our hands were tied and were unable to add to the sum, as our budget bill had been completed in the Majles. But we have told Mr. Najafi that we will pass a temporary resolution and the Majles will help too.

The areas where you think there might be a reduction in the training and education budget will be dealt with in the second development plan. I hope the best employees of the government, who are a real asset to the country, the teachers, will be happy at the end of the second development plan.

[Larijani] Mr. Nahavandian might complain that I am taking up his time, but I have another question. Again it is a personal one. Your Excellency has to deal with various types of work during the day. Your timetable might show various kinds of work. Your experience in running the country is a prime example of running a country. Your Excellency was preceded by his eminence the great leader [Khomeyni], but now it is your term. These things should be studied in order to provide an example for the future.

How do you organize your work? How much do you rely on consultation? You are, of course, a very patient person. Do you ever lose your temper? What provokes you? It would be interesting to know if any issue might have made you really angry. I can hardly imagine that you being angry. But, for a leader with such a variety of work to deal with, it is important issue. How do you asses your work? Do you criticize your own decisions, the way you perform your tasks? Do you like your work being be criticized or examined so that a better work schedule can be established. In fact, what I am talking about is the most important and private nucleus of the leading management of the system.

[Rafsanjani] Your question was about five or six subjects. I might forget to answer them all; so please remind me if I forget to answer some of them.

You asked about my daily routine. Usually after morning prayers I watch the news and study overnight world developments. If I can spare the time, I listen to some foreign radio stations to see what they are saying about us. I go to my office first thing in the morning, as I have to sign, review, or respond to some administrative report for three hours by about midday, that is, at about 0930. [passage omitted]

Our cabinet meetings are open discussions. We discuss issues with the relevant officials and experts for a very long time. None of our decisions are made on the spur of the moment and none of them are made by a single individual, unless I have to intervene in the wake of a new development to perform a task.

State decisions are made either during cabinet meetings or in various councils. There are usually lengthy discussions, with those in favor and those against a certain proposal speaking in turn. We evaluate past performances, and criticize and review various aspects of work before making further decisions. Every task begins after a decision is made, and ultimately the president can be more influential in decision making than others.

There is a series of more general and more important tasks which I raise with the esteemed leader [Khamene'i]. We usually meet with his eminence once a week to discuss important issues and to ask his opinion. Sometimes it might be necessary to ask for his eminence's opinion in the middle of the week. In summary, decisions are made after discussions, consultation, study, and criticism.

[Larijani] The role of consultation gives us plenty of hope.

[Haddad] Do you follow a model in your daily routine? I ask this question on behalf of students who are taking courses in management studies. Do you have a model of work studies? That is, how do you prioritize your time? How do the priorities change during a time period?

[Rafsanjani] We organize a timetable for each month. The schedule is registered in my office. We also set a weekly timetable. It becomes clear what sort of work is scheduled for our week from Saturday until late on Thursday. We also organize programs for our weekends and holidays. For instance, some Fridays I deliver the prayer sermons. Sometimes I go on a trip or have other engagements. I usually work late into the night, until 2200 or 2230 in the evening. [passage omitted]

[Haddad] There was an issue in Mr. Larijani's question which was not answered. He asked if anything makes you angry? During your daily and weekly routine have you ever showed an extraordinary sensitivity toward an issue.

[Rafsanjani] Yes.

[Larijani] We mean in the affairs of running the country.

[Rafsanjani] Yes, it happens. There are several issues which make me angry and I show an immediate reaction.

First, if I see individuals ignoring the rights of the people or mistreating the people. I become very angry if this is our own employees.

Something else that makes me angry is when there is no progress in work for deprived areas and deprived people. I feel very frustrated when we sometimes cannot make progress in our work for these areas. This sort of thing often happens.

There are other issues which make me angry and cause me to lose may temper. For instance, media analyzes and views which undermine the gains of the revolution and magnify the difficulties and the weak points in an exaggerated and sensationalized way. This makes me very angry, but not because I think they undermine our work, because this is exactly what the enemies want to see. Our enemies are waiting to see something here to be able to say that the Islamic Revolution cannot control the country. Our own friends with our own resources put this ready-made meal at their disposal. I feel sad over these type of issues. My sadness continues for a quite a long time over some issues. However, that is natural and this is life.

[Larijani] I have an important question about our foreign policy—about the issue of Palestine. I especially want to put this question to you, Your Excellency, because you were sensitive about the Palestine issue before the revolution. You translated a book. It was very brave at the time. You have always had a view over this issue.

Today, the Palestine situation has entered a new phase. We are concerned about the people of Palestine and their future. We have another concern with regard to the role of Israel in the Middle East—it is apparently trying to get involved everywhere, for instance in the Persian Gulf, in the Arab countries. Sometimes, one can see that the Arab countries have joined a very scandalous contest to get closer to Israel.

There is another issue. When Western countries, especially the United States, talk about us, they constantly charge us with being against this so-called peace process. They want to make this a foreign policy issue for us. Their propaganda asks why, if the Palestinians want to compromise with Israel and the neighboring Arab countries compromise with Israel, we, who are miles away, should oppose this. This has become an important foreign policy issue for us from various aspects. Sometimes it is ridiculous that countries which have no cause for concern should urge us, when they talk to us, to take a softer approach toward this issue.

How do you see this issue? Do you think this process or so- called conspiracy that they have hitched in the region will easily be implemented? What is our role? How much is our policy justified and how much it is worth defending? Is our current policy a logical one? Should we follow it up with some firmness or we should amend it? What is your view?

[Rafsanjani] From the moment I entered into politics and became involved with social matters, the issue of Palestine has always occupied my mind. I consider this one of the crucial problems facing the world, and particularly the Islamic world. It is clear that the problem of Palestine is not confined to Israel and its neighbors, or the Palestinians. This is a problem of the Islamic world against the world of blasphemy, which has usually involved the East and the West. Previously, the former Soviet Union, the United States, Britain, and others were involved. They were on one side and a few countries were on the other side.

It is clear to me that the problem cannot be resolved easily, not by one side making Israel everlasting [payedar], nor by us on this side being able to put Israel in its place and restoring the Palestinians' right. It is a difficult task for both sides. If only two countries were involved, one of them would have won sooner or later. But at the present there are two sides engaged in the conflict.

The conditions are bad now. The Palestinians' plight is worst now. This is because the Islamic and Arab states, which considered themselves custodians, have surrendered and become humble. They abandoned their positions as the Palestinian backers. And the United States, which is in charge of the arena, is galloping almost without a rival.

However, they would be mistaken to think the problem can be finished in this way. Ultimately, one day, the world situation will make a solution necessary. After all, the hearts of Muslims, the hearts of justice-seeking people of the world, be they Arabs or non- Arabs and non-Muslims, will not permit a nation to be left homeless in this way while their homes are taken by individuals gathered from various regions of the world, who then try to continue this by force and propaganda. The fuel for this torch will run out one day.

As to the question of how we can regain the right of the Palestinians, the plan is extensive, and it requires the resources of the Islamic world could back the issue. There is no need to go to war. What I mean is that if our economic, political, and cultural resources were concentrated, it would not be in the interest of the West to get so much entangled with our resources. Unfortunately there is division in the Islamic world today.

If one day the Muslims find a relative unity; that is, if 10 or 12 heads of the Islamic states were to unite and make a joint decision, we could then make the West understand that it would not be in its interest to oppress the Palestinians so much. If not 10 to 12 states, five or six of the more influential heads would be sufficient.

As to what extent our single stance would be effective, we have said from the beginning that we are determined to defend justice, and we will do so. But their allegation that we intend to defend justice by resorting to terrorism is a lie. No one can achieve anything that way.

You saw in our struggle [against the Shah and Iraq] that the people's front gained victory. Those who resorted to terrorism and other such actions gained nothing. What brought victory to the Iranian people should continue. We must explain this to the people. We must explain the plight of the Palestinian people and their usurped rights. Of course our voice is not as far-reaching as the voice of the other side, but this voice will not be lost in space.

[Larijani] I'm sorry to interrupt you, but our voice is not too limited. I mean, no Arab army is now facing up to Israel, but there is a huge bulwark of people. Israel did not necessarily become influential after signing the Camp David agreement in Egypt, in spite of the fact that they have an embassy and other footholds there.

[Rafsanjani] Yes, but there is need for someone to be the standard-bearer of the scattered views of the people. It is not that the Islamic Republic's stance is wasted, for even if this process may be damaging to us, Palestine's aspiration benefits a lot from it. As you said, people's sympathies lie with this stance; they do not like this terrible oppression. I think our stance is a just one and we articulate this justness. A just stance makes a much greater impact than an unjust one; it is far more influential.

[Nahavandian] Mr. Larijani diverted the discussion to external matters. I would like to point to another dimension of this issue and that is the issue of Iranians residing abroad...

[Larijani, interrupting] This is not related to Palestine.

[Nahavandian] Yes, but still, they too are abroad [laughter] A substantial number of our compatriots are living abroad right now. In recent years a very visible movement began—Iranians residing abroad came over in different ways, to invest, to work, or to seek employment. They include both skilled and unskilled persons, and a variety of others. What is your excellency's own assessment of this process? Is the rapid pace continuing?

Then, as a general point, do we have a program for these compatriots abroad? That is, does your excellency sympathize with them and feel the same way about them as you do about Iranians at home—drawing up plans for their progress, for social justice. Do we have a program to prescribe or any advice to give? One aspect of this, of course, is the debate over higher qualifications and expertise. What plans do we have to attract Iranians with expertise?

[Rafsanjani] Yes, after all, this was one of the problems that arose for the country after the revolution. Some people left because they were in disharmony with revolutionary conditions or for other reasons. Among these were quite a number of educated people, managers and so forth. I won't stress this aspect of the issue—it is the human dimension that is of importance to me. Of course, the principle that there are Iranians abroad is not altogether something negative. There are Iranians who want to be abroad and work there, learn more, or carry something with them from Iran to teach over there and to establish links. This is a fact that will remain with us. We will continue to have this trend of Iranians living abroad.

[Unidentified speaker] But this has already been going on and we had this trend even before the revolution.

[Rafsanjani] Yes, it has always been there. But the idea that some people may feel alienated and...

[Unidentified speaker, interrupting] Like refugees.

[Rafsanjani, continuing] ... and feel that they would like to be in their own country but have a problem about it—this is not something I like. I think that over 90 percent of those who are abroad do not have such a problem, and we should help them so they can come over here if they wish to. Or, if they have got used to living abroad, they could at least resume their links. They could come and go, consider that this is their country, maintain relations with their families. In particular, the children of the next generation should not become alienated. It is really a shame that these Iranian children may not even be able to speak Persian in the future, and one feels sorry for them. I do keep myself informed about the Iranians abroad and study their works, and I feel that many of them love Iran and do not want to be forgotten in Iran. They do not want to forget Iran either.

Therefore, I believe that the first important task is to establish a correct contact between them and Iran. This should of course be more organized than at present.

Second, they should feel secure about returning. I have already declared that they do have this security. Anyone who wants to [pauses] ... There are a limited number of people with specific files who can clarify their situation there before coming over. They can seek advice...

[Larijani, interrupting] They can go to lawyers and pursue the matter. [Rafsanjani, continuing] ... in accordance with legal practice. Anyway, there are only a few of them, and even if they do not return it is no big deal. The majority of people, however, could return.

[Rafsanjani] One thing I think could be used more effectively is that Iranians abroad imagine that the situation in Iran is the same as that described by our opponents here, by the very people who make me angry. But they should really speak about the realities here, about Iran's achievements, about the criteria of the development plan. This country has emerged from a war and within a space of five years achieved a GNP of nearly 7.3 percent. What other country has achieved this? [passage omitted]

We ought to remind foreigners about these facts and make Iranians take note of them so they are aware of what is happening in their country. They should not think that because they have left, we are unable to build the country without them and are pleading with them to return. They should know that the country is progressing without them and that the more they delay their return, the more they will be left behind!

These negative images which are unfortunately sometimes reflected in our media—because they have an urge to solve problems themselves—it is these negative things which Iranians abroad hear about. If they knew more about Iran many of them would return. We should establish contact. One feels sorry both for Iran for losing its children in this way, and also for those who may lose their mother in this way.

[Larijani] So, this paternalistic spirit should be conveyed to them. They should feel the kindness of our country's officials—your excellency's kindness and that of others. They should feel that it includes them because they are Iranians...

[Rafsanjani, interrupting] There are other voices which are louder than ours, that is, we have to convey these things to them through our own media. When they see some petty things here, they think that this is what the situation is like.

[Larijani] But our behavior can be very effective. If a university lecturer comes over here, for example, stays for a while, and then sees that he is accepted, respected, and given facilities, then he returns and tells 10 others about it.

[Haddad] Work is being done in this country. There is need for respect, yes, but more important is that they should know that people are serious about their work.

[Rafsanjani] Sometimes they may think that they deserve more. They expect more than those who have remained in Iran and endured the war and everything. This is too much to ask for. But they should know that we respect their rights.

[Haddad] Mr. Hashemi, if our friends here do not have any other question, I would like to put the last question to you, if everyone else agrees. This question is different from all the other things we have discussed here.

Normally, when you come to the Friday prayers, you recite this prayer while performing your Qonut [ritual gesticulation]: O God, pray do not leave us on our own, even for a time as short as the blinking of an eye, in this world or in the life after death. [prayer read first in Arabic then translated by Haddad into Persian]

These are verses that many people may recite, but different people have different things in mind while they recite them. When I am at the Friday prayers and hold my hands up to the sky like you, I am very interested to know what it is that the president is asking God, pleading with him with utmost modesty and heartfelt sentiment. [passage omitted]

[Rafsanjani] In a position of authority, I feel with my entire being that we can achieve nothing without God's help. I always feel this in my body. I feel that God is always with me like my shadow and is watching all my actions. I know that if God abandons us, we would be annihilated very quickly. We are nothing.

If you look at the history of our revolution, you will see this: in our people's victory against a blood-sucking regime; our victory in a war in which all the forces of evil joined ranks against us while we were isolated and were fighting single-handed; our victory in the United Nations at a time when there was not a single voice to support us and where the tyrants had to admit that we had been wronged; our victory during the reconstruction period in rebuilding our country from the ruins of war, when no-one thought this could be done even in 100 years. We rebuilt the country so quickly.

Several days ago I went to Kharg Island. I saw that Kharg has been rebuilt and is now better than it was before the war. I see how God has honored Islam and our revolution in the face of so many satans and evil voices which are trying to undermine and weaken us. When I see all this, I realize that no nation can achieve so much single-handedly by standing on its own two feet alone.

There is no doubt that God is helping us, and I truly beseech Almighty God to continue His assistance to this nation. It is only through the Almighty's succor that we can achieve anything. That is all I wish to ask from God.

May we remain pious to be worthy of God's favor. God does not favor those who do not deserve it. No nation is a particular favorite nation of God. Almighty God views all creatures as equals. Creatures win God's favor by being good.

[Larijani] Thank you for your time.

[Rafsanjani] I thank you gentlemen too for taking me away from my daily routine. I enjoyed being in a different atmosphere to discuss various subjects.

Former Deputy Governor of Central Bank Released

LD2512150394 Tehran IRNA in English 0638 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 25, IRNA—Former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) for Foreign Exchange Affairs, Asghar Fakhriyeh Kashan, was released from custody, it was announced Saturday [24 December].

Kashan was detained sometimes ago to be interrogated on certain questions and ambiguities.

An informed source told IRNA in this connection that Kashan was released after giving the necessary explanations and clarifying ambiguities. He did not elaborate further.

Kashan was a former member of the managerial board and deputy governor for foreign exchange affairs of the CBI. He had served as the deputy governor for international affairs of the CBI since last December.

Pakistan

Bhutto on Israel, Kashmir, Afghan Arabs, Arms

JN2712153594 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 19-25 Dec 94 p 19

[Interview with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto by Zaki Shihab in London; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Shihab] Your planned visit to Gaza Strip was postponed at your request. Do you still have plans to visit the Palestinian self-rule areas in the near future?

[Bhutto] The aim of that visit was to express Pakistan's support for the peace process. We view what has happened so far as a first step toward a just peace. However, we believe that the issue of Jerusalem is important and central to the Islamic world. The aim of the visit was to show our support for President Yasir 'Arafat and the Palestinian people. However, I gave up the visit when I heard I needed a permit from the Israeli authorities.

[Shihab] Does that mean that Pakistan is unlikely to recognize Israel for the time being?

[Bhutto] This issue should be coordinated with the fraternal Arab countries. To us, the future of Jerusalem is very important. Therefore, matters should be clarified before we take any step toward recognition.

[Shihab] Did you boycott the Casablanca economic summit for these reasons?

[Bhutto] I did not boycott it. Pakistan was represented at the summit by the minister of commerce and tourism. I could not go there because of my ties at that time.

[Shihab] Did the participation of the minister of commerce and tourism mean that economic cooperation between Pakistan and Israel was likely?

[Bhutto] We have to deal with and study this issue cautiously and in cooperation with the Islamic countries. It is better for us to see a just peace before planning to cooperate in other vital areas such as water, electricity, and oil projects. Islamic countries such as Pakistan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Iran have considerable potentials. Therefore, we should study and bolster our cooperation before looking toward Israel.

[Shihab] Pakistan has failed to obtain international support for its position on Kashmir. Why?

[Bhutto] Even though the United Nations has issued resolutions calling for granting the Kashmiris the right to self-determination, the world community still abstains from forcing India to implement these resolutions. In addition, India itself is not eager to reach a solution. It still imposes unfair decisions, continues arrests and killings, and reinforces its troops in the region. More than 20,000 Kashmiris are still in Indian jails.

[Shihab] Does this mean a war between Pakistan and India is possible?

[Bhutto] The issue of Kashmir has previously caused two wars, and a third war may break out if India continues to ignore the Kashmiris' right to self-determination.

[Shihab] The Indian prime minister has promised for the first time to hold free elections in Kashmir.

[Bhutto] This promise lacks credibility. The boycott of elections by the Kashmiris will prove that the Indian Government enjoys no support on the ground. Kashmir has never been part of India, and it has been a disputed land since 1947.

[Shihab] Some Arab countries believe that Pakistan has turned into a refuge for the extremists and Afghan Arabs. Do you cooperate with these countries to check the activities of these groups on you territory?

[Bhutto] We signed a security cooperation agreement with Egypt. What I want to say here is that when the war broke out in Afghanistan, Pakistan was open for Arab and other volunteers. This had been internationally welcomed, and no country spoke about the background or political affiliations of the volunteers. After the war, a clamor was made and it has not subsided yet. I have made it clear to all Arab and non-Arab friends that Pakistan will not allow its territory to be used for carrying out illegitimate activities against any friendly or sisterly country. In case any state or side says that a party or individual is carrying out hostile action from Pakistan, we will be ready to cooperate on this subject within the framework of the international laws and norms. We signed an agreement with Egypt, and we are ready to sign cooperation agreements with other countries.

[Shihab] What about the Pakistani-U.S. relations? How long will they remain cool?

[Bhutto] We continue to have contacts with the Untied States, but we emphasized to the U.S. officials that we will not allow an international team to inspect nuclear power stations in our country before India signs an agreement to this effect. The United States stopped its economic assistant to us in 1990 due to what they described as our possession of nuclear warheads. This is speculation that they cannot confirm.

[Shihab] But the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency said you have the ability to manufacture 15 nuclear bombs. The statements of a former Pakistani prime minister confirm this.

[Bhutto] What Nawaz Sharif said was irresponsible and untrue; they were statements designed to incite the Pakistani street against me and my government, but he failed in this. We have repeatedly emphasized that we, as Pakistanis and Muslims, are proud of our ability to manufacture a nuclear bomb, with the capabilities we have, but we have not yet manufactured nuclear weapons due to our respect for our international commitments and our desire to keep science and nuclear power in the service of peace and humanity, and not in the manner India is doing. India continues to manufacture medium-and long-range nuclear missiles that are directed at populated Pakistani cities.

[Shihab] Is there a possibility of reaching a compromise between India and Paksitan on nuclear weapons?

[Bhutto] We agreed long ago on making the area nuclear-free, but Indian officials refuse this. They also refuse to allow international teams to visit their nuclear stations. On the contrary, India has recently developed the short-range nuclear Prithvi missile and Aan [name as transliterated] missile that can hit all major Pakistani cities.

Issue of U.S. Unreturned Arms Payments Viewed

BK2512095794 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 25 Dec 94 p 7

[Editorial: "Pak-US Money Matters"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Money may mean nothing to the rich of the West, but countries like Pakistan, eking out a meagre existence in tough times, need it badly. How badly is evident from Islamabad's relentless efforts to retrieve its $1.23 billion that it has paid to the United States for a variety of now frustrated defence purchases, including 38 F-16s. The latest in a string of proposals emanating from Pakistan, conveyed to the US Defence Department last month is that the paid-for equipment be sold to a third party and the proceeds be returned to Pakistan. This is one way to work around the Pressler Amendment that prohibits the delivery of arms to Pakistan.

Whether this proposal will help break the ice that has frozen in acrimony Pak-US defence relations for almost six years now, depends a great deal on Washington's policy priorities. There may be reasons to be optimistic the most cogent being the resumption of talks between Pakistan and US defence officials. William Perry, the US Defence Secretary, is scheduled to come to Islamabad in three weeks' time—a visit that follows on the heels of a delegation headed by the US Under-Secretary of Defence for Policy, Walter Slocombe. These high-level meetings show that the US, after years of foot-dragging and mealy-mouthing, has finally been convinced of the importance of resolving this issue that is casting a long shadow over the whole gamut of bilateral ties. Therein lies the reason to be hopeful that a solution may emerge out of these negotiations.

But there are impediments to be sure, and none is bigger than the fallout of attempts by the previous US administration to enmesh a simple, straight-forward business deal with intractable issues like the Pressler Amendment. The Bill Clinton administration now claims that the futility of the Pressler law does not alter the fact that it is on the statue book, and delivering any kind of military equipment to Pakistan will contravene it. That may be so, but a less restrictive interpretation of the law, one that leaves out of its scope the cash-and-carry purchases of defence equipment, could have solved the problem amicably.

While doing away with the Pressler Amendment may not be possible for the Bill Clinton administration, and the price demanded by it to lift the law unacceptable for Pakistan, they can certainly agree to settle the money matters. The eminent merit of the latest Pakistani proposition is that it provides a compromise solution to what has so far remained an intractable problem. Islamabad, like a sensible buyer, is willing to forego the F-16s and the rest of the sinews—perhaps just as well—as long as it gets its money back. It is for the US to now show the good sense of not alienating a customer with whom it has a lot of business to conduct in the future.

'Debate' Continues on Nuclear Program, Perry Visit

Politicians 'Agitate' the Issues

BK2712105794 Islamabad THE NATION in English 27 Dec 94 p 6

[Editorial: "Nuclear Programme Debate"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A debate on the unfreezing of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme has of late been conducted by lobbies which want Pakistan to come out of the closet as a declared nuclear weapons state. These lobbies range from the Opposition to prominent retired service individuals with hawkish views on the subject. Speculation as to the timing of all this sudden spurt of interest in an otherwise 'on-going' issue centres around the visit to Pakistan of the US Secretary of Defence, Mr William Perry, on January 9. Mr Perry's visit is being interpreted in some circles, of whom the Jamaat's Qazi Hussain Ahmed has perhaps been the most vociferous in the expression of his views, as the prelude to the government's caving in under US pressure to comply with the American agenda of rolling back and eventually eliminating Pakistan's 'capped' nuclear programme. Pakistan's position on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which is due for review in 1995, has consistently remained, no matter which government was in power, that it cannot sign the treaty unilaterally and will only do so if India signs, which India has so far steadfastly refused to do. The critique of the policy of nuclear 'ambiguity' is carried further when it is argued that irrespective of whether India signs or not. We should not since we open ourselves up to a window of vulnerability as regards a second strike capability if the imbalance in nuclear capability between Pakistan and India is allowed to be frozen in time and place. Not to be left behind, the PML (N) [Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz], through its spokesman Chaudry Nisar, is now agitating for an unfreezing of the nuclear programme, which act it places securely at Benazir Bhutto, Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Aslam Beg's door, as the ruling troika in 1989 when the decision was taken. The Chaudry extrapolates the 'unity' between the present President, PM [Prime Minister] and COAS [Chief of Army Staff] as providing the conditions for revoking the freeze and taking urgent steps to meet the nuclear threat from across the border. To this end the Opposition, says Chaudry Nisar, has prepared a resolution to be presented in the National Assembly but this draft, despite being given by the Speaker to Foreign Minister Sardar Asif, has yet to see the light of day. If the government refuses to play ball in the National Assembly, the Opposition intends to present the resolution in the Senate.

It is difficult to give credence to these critics' rhetoric, which appears misplaced. In the case of the Opposition, it is difficult to follow their logic since they took no steps when Nawaz Sharif was in power, to do what they are now asking the government to do. That leads to the suspicion that the Opposition may only be using the issue as a weapon to score points at the expense of the government in the continuing war of words between the two sides of the political divide. If this is true, it seems the choice of issue is deplorable, given the sensitivity for Pakistan's interests of the nuclear programme. It would have been in the fitness of things if both government and Opposition, rising above partisan party interests, had evolved a consensus on the issue so as to avoid even inadvertently damaging Pakistan's interests by a hullabaloo whose sole result would be further discriminatory pressures internationally on the country. Whatever Mr Perry's agenda in Islamabad, and even if Qazi Hussain Ahmed's thesis is accepted at face value, does in not behave us all to present to the Americans a united face so as to be able better to resist the very pressures that are apparently giving Qazi sahib sleepless nights? As far as the NPT is concerned, the Prime Minister has responded to the speculations being floated in the Press with a categorical reiteration of Pakistan's known position that it will not sign unilaterally. Given its sensitivity, one would have preferred our politicians not to agitate the issue merely to gain political mileage out of it.

Foreign Minister Rules Out Compromise

BK2712041294 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has ruled out the possibility of any compromise on Pakistan's peaceful nuclear program, saying that there is no change in Pakistan's principled stand on the issue. Talking to reporters at Parliament House in Islamabad last night, he said it is not true that there is any pressure from the United States on Pakistan to cap its peaceful nuclear program.

Referring to the forthcoming visit of William Perry, the U.S. secretary of defense, the foreign minister said the visit is a part of joint efforts by the two countries to improve their bilateral relations. He said Pakistan will take up the issue of the threat posed to its security by the Indian naval buildup. Answering a question, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said Pakistan continues to buy spare parts of defense equipment, including those of F-16's, from the United States.

The foreign minister categorically denied that there is any plan on the agenda to lease Gwadar Port to any foreign country. He said that Pakistan is seeking a commercial deal to develop the port at Gwadar, which is necessary for Pakistan's national interests and for its future trade with the Central Asian states. He said the government is committed to safeguarding Pakistan's independence and territorial integrity at all costs.

Debt Payment, Exchange Rate Accords Signed With Russia

BK2312135494 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 23 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan and Russia have signed letters of exchange concerning payment of debt and determining the exchange rate of Russian ruble to Pakistani rupee.

The Russian deputy minister of foreign economic relations and secretary of economic affairs signed the documents in Islamabad today. The two sides agreed on the issue of repayment of Pakistan's debt to the Russian Federation for 1994 on credit granted to Pakistan by the former Soviet Union.

Russian Intention Not To Sell Arms Viewed

BK2512094694 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Dec 94 p 6

[Editorial: "Looking Beyond the Russian Arms Denial"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russian Prime Minister has assured his Indian counterpart that Moscow has no intention of selling any arms to Pakistan. This statement followed the ceremony of signing eight agreements between New Delhi and Russia including the two pacts providing for a five-year-long military co-operation in technical fields and for cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space. While this assurance is reminiscent of the Indo-Soviet relationship of the past, the crisis in Chechenya is also being portrayed by Moscow on the same lines on which New Delhi perceives the uprising in Kashmir. Defying all the reports coming out of Grony through the Western media and Russian military sources that the Chechens are severing their forced relationship with Moscow, the recent fighting in the Caucasus mountains is visualised by the Russian leaders as the work of Azers, Afghans, and Pakistanis!

Nothing could be more distant from truth than this portrayal of the movement in Chechenya. The Muslims of this region had never accepted Russian hegemony and the history of the conflict between the Cossacks of the nineteenth century and the Chechens bears testimony to this uneasy relationship. This movement started when Pakistan did not even exist and the Azeris and the Afghans were not even near the battlefields in the 1860s, 1940s and the post Second World War era. It is indeed a distortion of history and a face-saving rhetoric without any substance or logic. But just as the Indians do not accept their responsibilities of the Kashmir crisis, the Russians have also started shifting the frontiers of this conflict to the theoretical framework propounded by anti-Muslim forces.

There was a time when the rightists like Liveronski were ridiculed in Moscow as the prisoners of their misconceived religious fundamentalism and the world felt safe at the apparently same statements issued by Russia in denouncing him but now it seems that the only pretext available to the Bear is to cry "Wolf". We do not question the right of Moscow to sell arms to India or to deny such a sale to Pakistan but this new alliance between Delhi and Moscow seems dangerous not only to this region but also to world peace. Indian claims to the British legacy of imperialism are too well-known and the countries of this region have been witnessing their manifestation for about half-a-century but now it is becoming clear that Moscow did not learn any lesson from the collapse of the Soviet Union and instead of concentrating on its domestic problems, is drifting back to the parameters of Czarist Russia.

Whereas Communist Russia had a political philosophy to propagate and implement without any declared religious overtones, Czarist Russia had followed religious zeal of its priests and their cohorts in the neighbouring states. Is it that legacy that Moscow now intends to revive?

This situation does not augur well for the countries of this region. So far as the question of arms supply to Pakistan is concerned Islamabad will be well advised to explore more reliable partners in this field as well as to develop its own infrastructure so that this dependence on neo-imperialist powers is minimised.

Views of Indian Consulate Closure in Karachi

Prime Minister Comments

BK2812094094 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 28 Dec 94 pp 1, 5

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, Dec 27 Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said here Tuesday [27 December] that the Government of Pakistan has taken the unpleasant decision of closing down the Indian Consulate General in Karachi due to subversive activities of the Consulate.

Speaking to a delegation of students of various groups Tuesday afternoon at the State Guest House, the Prime Minister said it was a "difficult decision" which had to be taken in the interest of national security.

The Prime Minister said there exists "irrefutable evidence" that the Indian Consulate was definitely involved in the recent terrorist activities.

The law enforcing agencies had arrested some "terrorists" and during interrogation it had been established beyond any doubt that the Indian consulate was very much involved, she added.

The arrested "terrorists" have confirmed that they were imparted training of terrorist activities in India, she added.

The Prime Minister said the government will never compromise on the question of security of the country and added it was a "non-negotiable issue".

The Government of Pakistan sorely desired "very cordial" relations with our neighbouring countries, the Prime Minister said but reaffirmed that it will never barter away the security of the country.

The Prime Minister said that the government has a declared policy over Kashmir issue and the recent tours of various government delegations have amply projected the "Kashmir dispute" at the international level.

Perhaps, the Prime Minister said, the Government of India did not like our "international projection" over the Kashmir issue and chose "Karachi" to settle the score.

The "terrorism" was sped up in Karachi simply to force the Government of Pakistan to abandon its policy on Kashmir.

There had been killings the Prime Minister said and added, the enemies have ordered for at least 10 to 15 killings daily and the government has 'irrefutable evidence" in this behalf, she added.

They have confessed their doings and the government was forced to take this "difficult decision", she added.

She denied that the government has taken a decision as a "retaliatory measure" due to the earlier decision of the Inidan government to close down the Pakistan consulate in Bombay.

The Prime Minister said the present government is an elected government of Pakistan and "we take decisions on merit".

Salahuddin Haider adds: The Indian Consulate General in Karachi ceased working as it sent back visa seekers lining since morning, and looked set to hand over the premises to caretakers, probably some foreign embassy.

Its 18-strong staff will be leaving soon. There are four officers, mostly without families. Two of the senior staff members Pinak Chakrobarty, the consul general and Sony the Visa Councillor, had arrived here recently. Pinak was in Karachi since five months, while Sony was a new arrival.

Since the government has given them 10 days to pack up, they will be leaving for Delhi by next week, sources said.

Attempts to contact the Indian Consulate officers remained unproductive as neither of them were available on telephone.

Both the Indian consulate and the residence of the Consul General was without extra police force which meant that chances of harassment were zero.

One grim fall out of the government decision will be on the commercial interests of the two national airlines—PIA and the Indian airline.

Both these carriers had been making profits because of the rush of tourists. Almost 500 visas were issued prior to the Babri Mosque tragedy. After that the staff in the diplomatic mission here had thinned.

The visas were curtailed to nearly 50 odd a day. However intelligence hounds positioned to keep a watch on diplomats movements, were interested in money making business by putting pressure on visa seekers, and then accepting bribe from them to allow people to fall in queue.

There are strong indications to believe that the consulate will not be allowed to operate ever again. Pakistan closed down its Bombay mission earlier this year, but diplomatic sources here do not believe the diplomatic ties to severe although relations between indian and Pakistan, already at lowest possible ebb, may nosedive further.

Editorial Cites 'Problems'

BK2812101994 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 28 Dec 94 p 6

[Editorial: "What After The Closure?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Government has finally taken the much awaited decision of ordering the closure of the Indian Consulate in Karachi. The decision should have been taken immediately after the Indian government forced the closure of Pakistan's mission in Bombay. What caused this delay is for the government to explain but it is always better late than never. Ever since the crisis in Sindh and more so in Karachi began to precipitate years ago, the Press and other forums of public opinion have been pointing out the involvement of the Indians in the dirty saga that has, so far, killed thousands of people. That the Indian Consulate General in Karachi was catering to the needs of many Pakistanis of divided families who have to visit India to meet their relatives, might have been one consideration for Pakistan to keep the office working. But as the foreign secretary has pointed out, security of the country takes precedence over sectional needs.

Indian involvement in the activities aimed at destabilising Pakistan are as old as the two countries. The circumstances that led to the creation of Pakistan in 1947 left a lot of bad blood. Both India and Pakistan came into being perceiving each other as enemies. The threat perception of both the countries were and still are based on mutual hostility towards each other. This gave rise to the widespread view that India has not reconciled to the creation of Pakistan. There is no denying the reality that New Delhi has never lost any opportunity to debilitate Pakistan. Using every weapon in its arsenal, India scored its most telling victory in 1971 when its forces struck at the fertile ground created and nurtured by the coalition of pygmy politicians and short sighted generals in the decade preceding our most humiliating debacle.

It is heartening that Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is conscious of the need to deny the Indians the fertile soil for promoting terrorism and anarchy in Karachi. Her readiness to talk to all and sundry to achieve a political solution to the Karachi problem indicates that our leaders are not unmindful of the lessons of history. But mere declaration of the government's intentions is not enough. If no concrete steps are taken to effect a rapprochement between the representatives of various sections of society, the mere closure of the Indian Consulate in Karachi may not end Indian involvement in the Sindh crisis. Miscreants will find a way to hop over to India for training and return to Pakistan to carry out terrorist activities—consulate or no consulate. The closure of the Indian Consulate has only stripped the terrorists of the easy means of induction into the continuing heinous plot to destabilise Pakistan.

Admittedly, the closure will cause problems to the divided families. But to make it a worthwhile sacrifice by the prospective visitors to India, the official step will have to be followed by determined efforts to achieve durable peace in Karachi. If the government fails in accomplishing that objective, the decision to close the Indian Consulate in Karachi would not achieve its stated purpose. Anyway, the consulate is now closed and it must not reopen even after normalisation in Karachi until and unless Indians reciprocate fully in Bombay.

Commentary Justifies Closure

BK2812060994 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 27 Dec 94

[Commentary by Mohammad Yamin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Closing down of the Indian Consulate General in Karachi had been on the cards for quite a while. In fact, in pursuance of the diplomatic norms and the specific agreement between India and Pakistan on the reciprocal opening of India's Consulate General in Karachi and that of Pakistan in Bombay, Pakistan would have been well within its right to ask for the closure of the Indian mission in Karachi after Pakistan was forced to close down its consulate general in Bombay in March this year. That Pakistan did not take any such action at that time might have been for reasons of avoiding inconvenience to the people living in the country's southern region who would want to travel to India. It also speaks a lot for the restraint exercised by Pakistan. It, however, appears that India's Karachi mission misunderstood the Pakistani gesture and vigorously undertook activities which are violative of international law. No sovereign state could allow it to operate in this manner from its own soil.

The Indian Consulate General in Karachi has been indulging in illegal and undesirable activities for a long time. Pakistan had repeatedly drawn the attention of the Indian Government toward this. In December 1992, the matter came to a head, and the Indian Government was asked to drastically reduce the staff of its Karachi mission from 64 to 20. This, however, did not seem to have the desired effect and Pakistan yet again expressed its serious concern over the undiplomatic activities of the Indian Consulate General at Karachi.

According to Pakistan's foreign secretary, evidence that has come to light recently has established that instead of stopping its illegal activities, the Indian Consulate General in Karachi has been deeply involved in fomenting disaffection. Its officials have time and again pressurized Pakistani visa-seekers to engage in anti-Pakistani activities and had played a significant role in the Indian intelligence agency, the RAW's [Research and Analysis Wing's] efforts to instigate the planning and execution of acts of terrorism and subversion in Karachi and elsewhere in Pakistan.

Activities of the network of RAW agents trained for the purpose of conducting terrorism and antistate activities have been coordinated from India's Consulate General in Karachi. A number of Pakistani citizens recruited by the Indian mission in Karachi for these nefarious activities have been apprehended and [who] have made a clear breast of their antistate activities. They include a retired civilian officer of the Ministry of Defense and three members of a group of eight RAW-controlled terrorists. These RAW agents have confessed to not only themselves indulging in acts of sabotage and terrorism, but also taking recruits to India and bringing back trained terrorists from India in boats.

In view of such irrefutable evidence, Pakistan was left with no other choice but to order the immediate closure of the Consulate General in Karachi, knowing that the closure of this office would mean some inconvenience to the visa-seekers living in and around Karachi. The security of the country comes first. Some measures would certainly be devised to facilitate the issue of Indian visas to those living in Karachi region.

The events leading to the closure of India's Consulate General in Karachi should [word indistinct] the international community thinking hard over India's conduct of interstate relations. It has proved itself as a state sponsoring terrorism, and the world community should contemplate measures to prevent India from carrying out such blatant and criminal acts which are designed to destabilize and intimidate its smaller neighbors.

Relations between India and Pakistan never had a smooth sailing. The closure of India's Karachi mission which was preceded by India's expulsion of an official of Pakistan's High Commission in New Delhi and Pakistan taking a similar action against an official of India's High Commission in Pakistan would undoubtedly result in increased tension. But, these ripples will perhaps subside in time. What is more important is that India should stop interfering in Pakistan's internal affairs and instead address itself to the resolution of the outstanding core issue between the two countries, which is a dispute over Jammu and Kashmir.

The uprising in the Indian-occupied Kashmir is spontaneous and indigenous and is widespread. Its extent and intensity cannot possibly be offset as India seems mistakenly to imagine by isolated acts of terrorism by Pakistani recruits of RAW who are perhaps forced or coerced into indulging in such acts. Even if such acts of terrorism result in some disruption to normal life, the government and the people of Pakistan are not going to be deterred to give up their just stand on Kashmir and would not stop extending moral, diplomatic and political support to their Kashmiri brethren engaged in a heroic struggle for their freedom from the Indian bondage.

Official Provides Details of Karachi Violence

BK2512163494 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 25 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Since the 1st of December, 49 terrorists have been arrested in Karachi and they are being interrogated. This was stated by Nissar Ahmad Khoro, minister for Planning and Development of Sindh, in a briefing on the law and order situation in Karachi this evening. The cases of these arrested terrorists will be referred to the Antiterrorism Courts. Nissar

Khoro said the prime minister has directed that compensation of 100,000 rupees each be provided to the bereaved families of the 72 innocent persons killed in the recent violent incidents in Karachi and 30,000 rupees each to the 104 persons injured in the recent shooting incidents in the city. The newsmen were informed that a total of 128 persons were killed during the current month. This includes those killed in domestic quarrels and feuds. The (?officials) killed include 15 policemen, five rangers, and one magistrate.

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